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the TRAVELLERS' Digest

Number 9

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A New Era Begins

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Capital of the 11,000 Worlds
Home of the Imperial Palace

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Traveller: 2300 includes complete rules for science fiction role-playing, a complete full color map of everything within 50 light years of Sol with accompanying stellar data, and an introductory adventure set on mankind's frontier. Be a part of the New Age, with **Traveller: 2300**.

GDW Game Designers' Workshop
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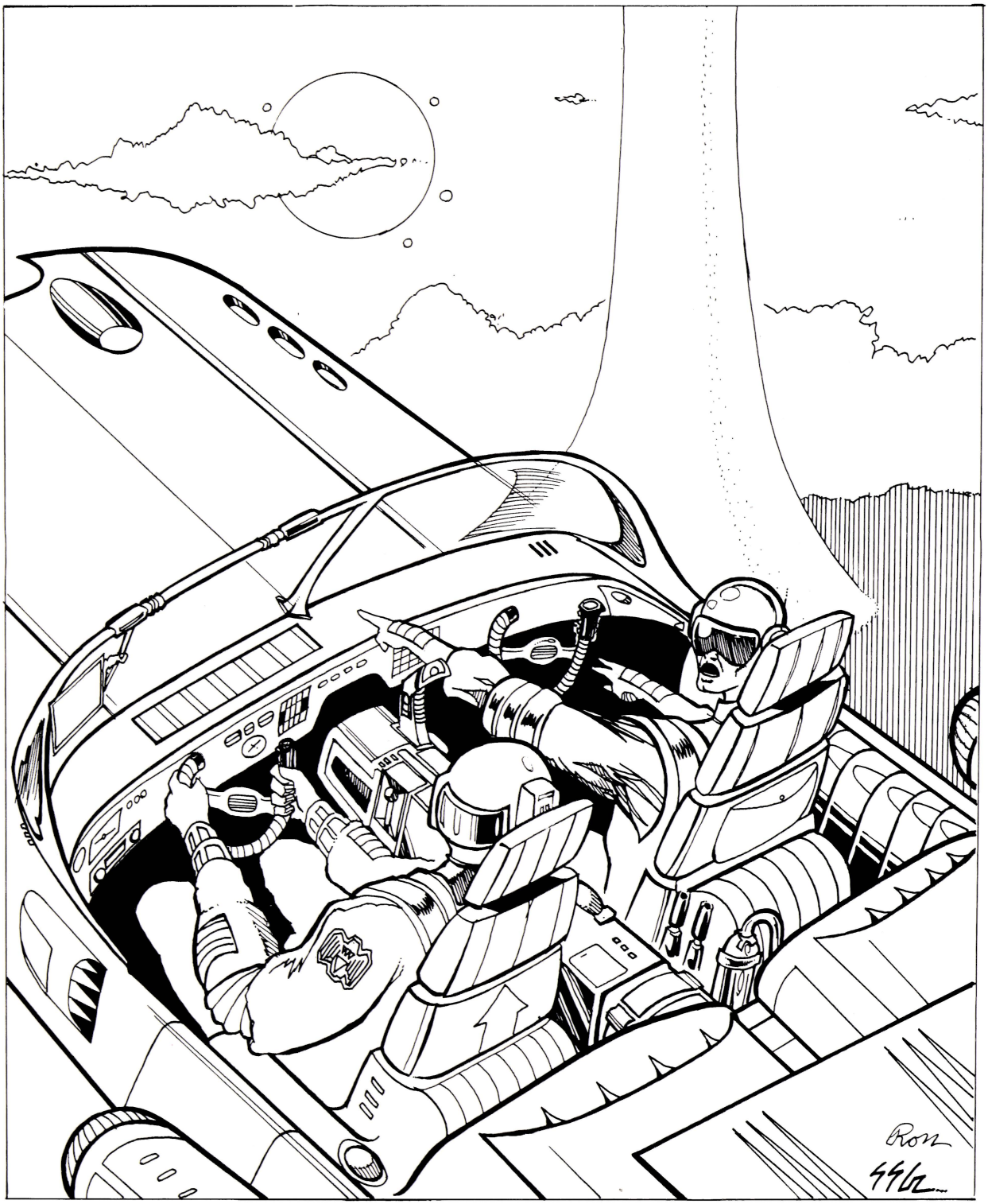
Before the Iridium Throne

FEATURE ADVENTURE



"From childhood, I remember my upbringing as 'citizen of the Third Imperium', and I remember vaguely what that meant to me. But having seen Capital, having seen the Imperial Palace, and having seen the emperor himself, I at last understand what it means to say, 'I am a citizen of the Third Imperium.'"
— Akidda Laagiir, from "Capital, the Father of 11,000 Suns" in the *Travellers' Digest*, 1105

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editors' Digest 3

Before The Iridium Throne, Feature Adventure 4
- Knight Falls on Capital 7
- Referee's Synopsis 8
- Out of the Frying Pan 8
- The Grand Tour 8
- Into the Fire 8
- Face to Face 9
- The Special Mission 9
- What Next? 10
- The Kidnap 10
- NPCs for the Adventure 11

Capital, World Profile 12
Capital, Cultural Profile 13

Lion At Bay, A MegaTraveller Scenario 14

Crack Troops: The Imperial Guard 18

The Imperial Palace 22
The Imperial Palace Grounds, centerspread 24

Noblesse Oblige: The Imperial Nobility 29

Xboat Routes of the Core Sector 34
Library Data of the Core Sector 35
Bunkeria Subsector 36
Cemplas Subsector 38

"Let's Get Physical", The Gaming Digest 40

An Interview with the Emperor 43

Traveller Q&A 46

Civilian Vehicles for Traveller:2300 47

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Suggestions by Joe D. Fugate Sr.

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EDITORS' DIGEST

This issue is part of a dramatic change in **Traveller**. Before we explain, we should clarify what our magazine has been doing for the last two years, and what it will be doing for the next three.

In our charter issue, exactly two years ago (happy birthday, *Travellers' Digest*, happy birthday to you), we talked about the format of the magazine: "Every issue will contain a full-length feature adventure. Our itinerary? A 'Grand Tour' of the Imperium: starting in the Spinward Marches, you'll travel to Vland, Capital, Terra, the Aslan Hierate, and across the Great Rift via the Jump-5 Route. Naturally, there will be plenty of stops along the way; you'll meet all the major races face to face, and many of the minor ones (including some you've never heard of)."

We're glad to say that our adventurers have safely made it two-fifths of the way. From the Spinward Marches in Adventure 1, they made it to Vland in Adventure 5, and here in Adventure 9: Capital, at last, home of the Emperor of the Third Imperium. Looking ahead, the characters will reach Terra in Adventure 13, and then on into Aslan space a little later. They still have quite a ways to go before they're home again.

The fiction we are involved in here is that the *Travellers' Digest* is a magazine published "behind the claw", in the Spinward Marches, Deneb, and Corridor Sectors. Akidda Laagiir, one of the characters in our continuing adventures, was awarded the Digest Touring Award from them. This outstanding journalism award is offered only once every seven years. The recipient is given membership in the Travellers' Aid Society, and is then expected to travel through the *Digest's* circulation area and submit a feature article about his latest journey once every thirteen weeks.

It is assumed that Akidda Laagiir is doing this, and you can see just inside each magazine a quotation from his article, together with the publication date. We started the adventurers in 1101, and are now in 1104 after travelling halfway across the Imperium. The adventures all take place in that time frame, and always have. (Yes, we know that the rest of published **Traveller** material is about 10 years beyond that—we're coming to the explanation.)

Now for the confusing part: obviously, Akidda knows some things, going on behind the scenes, that he doesn't tell in his feature articles. Some things can not be told as they happen without getting too many others in trouble. But these stories can eventually be told. In our magazine, if you look just above the list of staff names, you'll see a "publishing date of this adventure". These represent Akidda's full stories, filed 10 years later, after he returned home. The player characters are of course in on the action, so they play out these historical adventures in their "complete" versions. There now, that wasn't so bad, was it?

Now for the really confusing part: thanks to the new expanded format of our magazine, we now have the opportunity to print more than just our regular campaign adventure. These adventures might take place at other times, and you'll have to watch the dates carefully to keep things in line. In this issue, for example, "Lion at Bay" is a short scenario which takes place in 1116. Why 1116? Sit back, take your shoes off, and listen to the whole explanation.

Traveller is 10 years old. It has well over 60 different titles published for it. The techniques of role-playing games have matured since the game first appeared, and the volume of material about the **Traveller** universe has mushroomed over the years as well.

Game Designers' Workshop recognizes these facts, and has therefore commissioned our staff here at Digest Group Publications to revise and enhance the **Traveller** rules. (To avoid confusing the present version of the game with these revised rules, we'll call the enhanced rules **MegaTraveller**.) Don't despair, **MegaTraveller** will still be the **Traveller** you all know and love, but we're consolidating features that need consolidating and expanding features that need expanding.

The first book of these revisions, for players, will be published at the end of the summer; the second book, for referees, will be published in the fall; a third book, containing background source material, will come out before the end of the year, and all three 96-page books will be available in a boxed set after that.

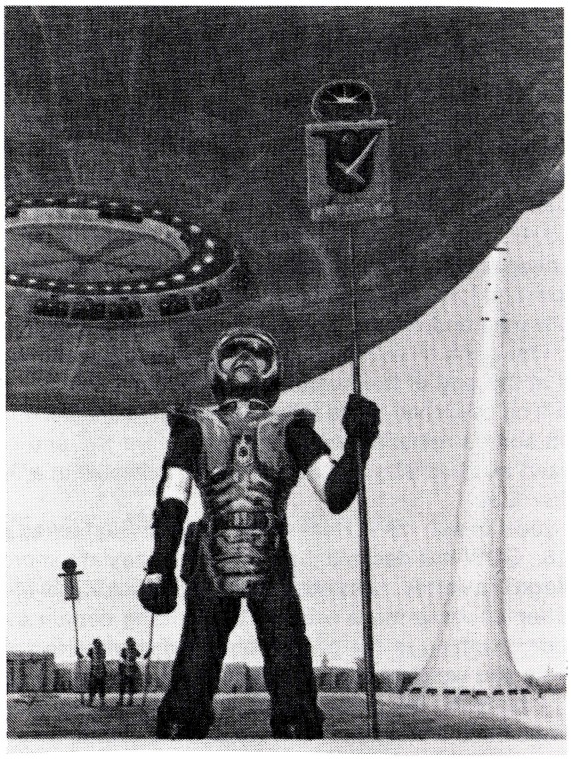
Are you still with me? Here's why "Lion at Bay" takes place in 1116. GDW has decided that as long as they are improving the **MegaTraveller** rules, they can also make the **MegaTraveller** universe more exciting by allowing certain events to occur. Nothing in the past is changed; history is still the same, so you won't need to alter your own campaigns. However, by bumping the game ahead a few years, they're opening the doors to a variety of new adventuring possibilities. We can't say more here without spoiling the adventure—you'll just have to play through it to find out what is going on in **MegaTraveller**.

Incidentally, if you can make it to Baltimore over the Fourth of July weekend, plan to drop in on the ORIGINS 87 game convention. We'll be there, together with GDW, celebrating **Traveller's** Tenth Birthday with a big party. You're all invited, and there should be plenty of cake for everyone, as well as a chance to meet the big names who have made **Traveller** what it has become over the last 10 years.

Finally, our new, larger format has allowed us to start including **Traveller:2300** material within the magazine. A few readers have asked that we not do this, and to them we can only apologize. Check our cover price—still the same. Check out the amount of **Traveller** material you are getting—more than ever. If you really can't tolerate the intrusion of another game into our pages, clip out the new material with your scissors and throw it away. You don't have to read it if you don't want to.

Speaking of our larger size, we have more pages to fill than ever before. If you haven't yet sent for a copy of our contributor's guidelines, send us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll get those to you by return mail. Our rates are competitive with the rest of the gaming industry, and we now pay upon acceptance rather than on publication. Here's your chance to put your ideas or artwork in front of thousands of **Traveller** players and referees—we need your material.

BEFORE THE IRIDIUM THRONE



Before The Iridium Throne deals with four knights who have deceived the emperor of the Imperium and must now face him. This issue marks the ninth episode in the continuing journey of four travellers on their voyage to the Imperial Capital. After leaving their home world more than three years ago, the group has finally reached the Imperial Capital.

It is assumed that this adventure will be administered by a referee who has read through it, and who is familiar with both this adventure and the rules for **Traveller**. The basic **Traveller** rules are all that is required. Paper, pencils, six-sided dice, and square-grid graph paper are needed, and a calculator is helpful.

Optional References: Additional helpful information may be found in:

- Book 8, *Robots*
- Supplement 8, *Library Data (A-M)*
- Supplement 11, *Library Data (N-Z)*
- *The Atlas of the Imperium*

The only background information required for this adventure is contained in this issue of the *Travellers' Digest.*

Chapters: This adventure is in several chapters, most of which are material to be read only by the referee.

This introduction may be read by both the players and the referee.

The chapter "Knight Falls on Capital" introduces the characters and the situation. This section is designed to be read to the players in order to acquaint them with the characters and their personalities.

The rest of the adventure is for the referee only; players may discover its secrets only by playing the adventure.

STANDARDS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This adventure takes place in the universe published and described by a multitude of **Traveller** products.

The Imperium is a huge human-dominated stellar empire thirty centuries in the future. It encompasses several hundred light-years of our segment of the Milky Way galaxy.

The Core Sector is a 32 by 40 parsec (1 parsec = 3.26 light-years) area at the center of the Imperim. A sector is divided into sixteen administrative areas called subsectors. Each subsector is 8 by 10 parsecs in size.

A world is commonly listed with its name followed by a slash and the name of its subsector location. For example, Capital/Core refers to the world *Capital* in the *Core* subsector.

Dates: All dates herein correspond to the Imperial calendar. The starting date of this adventure is 066-1104.

Place: This adventure takes place on the world Capital, the central seat of the Imperial government and the home of the emperor. The Imperium is a vast and powerful interstellar empire over 1000 years old, and encompassing more than 11,000 worlds.

CHARACTERS

This adventure is intended for the characters listed. Feel free to change any or all of the genders as desired. Additional background information for these characters can be found in other issues of the *Travellers' Digest.*

AKIDDA LAAGIIR

Journalist 858AAB Age 44 6 terms Cr28,000
Interview-5, Streetwise-3, Grav Vehicle-1, Wheeled Vehicle-1, Admin-1, Brawling-1

Born: 319-1059 on Mora/Mora
Position: Current recipient of the *Travellers' Digest* Touring Award.

Akidda Laagiir started at the age of eighteen as a copy boy with the *Mora World Review*; his friendly face and his ability to get people to trust him contributed to his steady career progress. Living on Mora, with its charismatic dictator, the Duchess Delphine the Matriarch, is sometimes a trying experience for any journalist, which may explain his occasionally iconoclastic actions. He is slightly prejudiced against "the system", preferring fresh ideas and fresh ways of doing things.

Akidda's most prominent skill is his interviewing ability. By his knowledge of psychology, body language, and oral communication, he has a good chance of discerning someone's feelings and drawing him out.

His admin skill was learned while moving up the ranks, but it is a skill that he would just as soon not need: he much prefers cutting through to the heart of a situation. While he is sensitive to the needs of others, he has a well developed self-preservation instinct that allows him to quickly adapt to strange locales and cultures—a skill that has saved his neck many times.

DUR TELEMON

Ex-Scout B7A85B Age 36 3 terms Cr8,000
Auto Pistol-3,Survival-2, Pilot-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Engineer-1, Gambling-1, Brawling-1

Born: 038-1068 on Mora/Mora

Dur Telemon was *born* into the Scout service. His father was in the Scout service while Dur was growing up, and both of his grandfathers served in the Scouts in their younger days. Dur enjoyed nothing more as a boy than to sit and listen to their tales of adventure. The Fourth Frontier War broke out when Dur was a teenager—his father's service in the war was a source of pride for the entire family.

Dur's individualistic nature meshed well with his duties in the Exploration Office of the Scout Service. In his first term, a "routine" mapping expedition on Pannet/Rhylanor suddenly turned into a hostage rescue operation, and it was then that Dur happened to save Dr. Krenstein's life.

The harsh conditions Dur often encountered taught him how to staying and live off the land in exotic environments.

Dur has resigned from the Scouts and is travelling with his uncle, Akidda Laagiir.

DR. THEODOR KRENSTEIN

Scientist 495FCB Age 60 10 terms Cr180,000
Robotics-5, Leader-3, JOT-2, Rifleman-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Electronics-1, Mechanical-1, Medical-1

Born: 173-1043 on Rhylanor/Rhylanor
Possessions: Tech Level 15 Hand Computer, Electronic Tool Kit, Robot AB-101
Position: Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics at Rhylanor Institute of Technology on Rhylanor/Rhylanor (on sabbatical leave).

Dr. Theodor Krenstein is a gifted, multi-talented scientist, with interests ranging from anthropology and archaeology to xenology and zoology, including most of the "ologies" in between. He holds advanced degrees in computer science and robotics.

After three terms as Dean of the School of Robotic Science at the Rhylanor Institute of Technology, he was appointed to the Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics, a prestigious and coveted position. He has to his credit 12 books, over 100 articles in technical and scientific journals, and holds more than 250 Imperial patents for his inventions and computer work. Despite this, he has become bored with academic life, and realizing his age, he has taken an extended sabbatical in order to make forays into other parts of the Imperium.

During a test of Scout survey robots in 1090 on Pannet/Rhylanor, members of a disgruntled anti-technist group kidnapped Dr. Krenstein and threatened to kill him if the Scout service didn't meet their demands. A young scout named Dur Telemon was part of the all-volunteer raiding team that finally freed Dr. Kren- stein; in fact, Dur was the first to reach the Doctor.

In the following year, Dr. Krenstein constructed his personal servant and bodyguard, AB-101.

AYBEE WAN OWEN

Valet FD9C8B Age 19(?) 0 terms Cr0
Medical-1, General Language-1, General Vehicle-1, Lt Laser Welder-1

Constructed: 1091 on Rhylanor/Rhylanor
Position: Personal servant and protégé of Dr. Theodor Krenstein.

AB-101, affectionately known as "Aybee", is a pseudo-biological robot designed and constructed by Dr. Krenstein. His UPP, skill levels, and other personal data are approximations, calculated by comparing human norms with Aybee's abilities. Although his programming gives him certain basic abilities, because of his lack of true artificial intelligence he can make errors in judgment; in abstract situations, this effectively lowers his true skill level.

Aybee's "weapon" is a light laser welder, built into his right arm. Dr. Krenstein has designed Aybee in such a way that his arm (ostensibly used only as a tool) can pass inspection by officials, since laser welders are not restricted by local law levels; however, voice override controls allow Dr. Krenstein to use Aybee as a weapon at short range.

Because Dr. Krenstein ordinarily conceals Aybee's true nature, Aybee was mistakenly granted knighthood in the Order of the Emperors' Guard along with the others, after certain events on Jode/Pretoria. Such an occurrence would be most humiliating to the emperor, so it has become imperative that Aybee's "true identity" not become a matter of public knowledge.

THE UNIVERSAL TASK PROFILE

In all our adventures we use the UNIVERSAL TASK PROFILE or UTP, which provides you with all the information you need about a task to be performed. Using the UTP you can quickly roll for a task attempt and know:

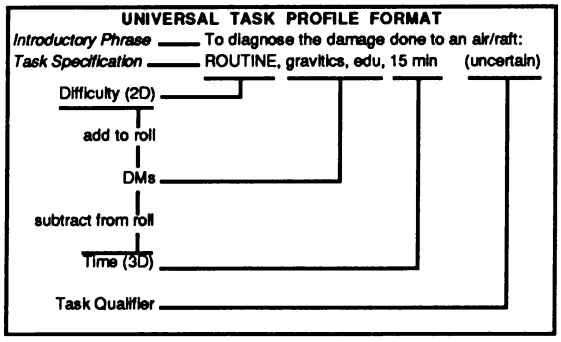
- the relative difficulty of the task;
- which skills and character attributes are useful;
- if the task is hazardous;
- how long the task attempt takes;
- if you can retry the task in the event of an unsuccessful attempt;
- if a mishap occurred while attempting the task.

In addition, you can:

- rapidly determine the effects of a mishap;
- discern the extent of the damage;
- know what tasks are needed to proceed with repairs.

In short, the UTP system provides a comprehensive and playable framework for defining and attempting tasks. We encourage you to make liberal use of it. A complete summary of the UTP procedures is on the next two pages.

The Universal Task Profile—handling tasks in *TRAVELLER*



HOW CRUCIAL IS THE CRUCIAL SKILL?

If the character attempting the task has no skill (not even skill level-0) in the crucial skill, make the task *two levels* harder (perhaps even to impossible).

If, in the referee's judgement, the character has a related skill, increase the task difficulty only *one level*.

Optionally, the combination of the character's intelligence and education may substitute for lack of skill (this represents all the character's intellect, knowledge, and experience brought to bear).

If the crucial skill listed in the UTP is deemed to be merely helpful rather than vital, declare the task to be *unskilled OK*.

TASK QUALIFIERS

Besides the standard unlabeled task, the other task types include:

Unskilled OK: Do not increase the task difficulty if the character does not have the crucial skill. However, most tasks should require the crucial skill; the unskilled OK task is an exception.

Hazardous: The task runs a much higher risk of mishap if the attempt fails. When rolling on the failure table, roll 3D instead of 2D.

Fateful: If the attempt fails, immediately roll on the mishap table (no retries are allowed). "To avoid a mishap" situations work well as fateful tasks.

Safe: The opposite of a hazardous task. Roll 2D on the failure table: if a mishap does occur, it is always SUPERFICIAL.

Uncertain: Immediate feedback on the success of the task attempt is not possible. When the player rolls for the task, the referee also rolls a hidden roll for the same task. The referee's hidden roll modifies the player's roll, as follows:

IF BOTH FAIL, the result is no truth. The player is totally misled as to the success of the task attempt. Completely false information is given.

IF ONE SUCCEEDS AND ONE FAILS, the result is some truth. Some valid information is given. Note that the player can fail and still get some valuable information—although he can not know for sure this is the case.

IF BOTH SUCCEED the result is total truth. Totally valid information is given. Notice the player may not believe all the information he is given, even though it is totally true.

SPECIAL CASES—THE REFEREE PARAGRAPH

As flexible as the UTP is, it can not cover all combinations of circumstances or conditions. Whenever special case situations exist, a special paragraph labeled REFEREE follows the UTP. For example:

REFEREE: This task is NON-REPEATABLE, only one attempt allowed.

REFEREE: Any mishap causes a security alarm to sound.

REFEREE: If any non-Scout character attempts this task, it becomes DIFFICULT.

SPECIAL TASK ATTEMPTS

The player can specify that his character is performing a special task attempt. Besides the regular task attempt, a player may select:

Hasty: Tends to shorten the task duration at the expense of difficulty. Increase the task difficulty one level and double the DMs before subtracting them from the time roll (a hasty attempt may take less time).

Cautious: The opposite of a hasty attempt, a cautious attempt provides a way to reduce the risk of failure when attempting a task, at the expense of time, and perhaps an increase in difficulty.

Before a player may try a cautious attempt, he must first make a determination roll: if successful, he may continue with the cautious attempt. If he fails to stay determined, the task increases in difficulty by one level, and he can not try a cautious attempt on this task.

If the determination roll was successful, the player may perform a cautious attempt. To perform the cautious attempt, decrease the task difficulty one level, and double the 3D time roll before subtracting the DMs from it (a cautious attempt may take more time).

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ATTEMPTING A TASK DEFINED BY A UTP

DIFFICULTY: Indicates the relative difficulty of the task (see table 1). From the difficulty level, determine the 2D roll needed to succeed.

Difficulty	*Roll Needed (2D)*
SIMPLE	3+
ROUTINE	7+
DIFFICULT	11+
FORMIDABLE	15+
IMPOSSIBLE	19+

Table 1

EXAMPLE: The format example to the left specifies a ROUTINE task. Consulting table 1, we see that a roll of 7+ (including DMs) is needed to succeed.

DMs: ADD DMs to the difficulty roll (DMs improve the likelihood of success)
SUBTRACT DMs from the time roll (DMs shorten the duration of the attempt).

DMs typically listed are the CRUCIAL SKILLS and CRUCIAL CHARACTERISTICS. These DMs represent the skills and characteristics judged most crucial to task success. Other factors will influence the task DIFFICULTY LEVEL rather than be used as additional DMs.

- *Crucial Skills:* use the character's skill level as the DM.
- *Crucial Characteristics:* use the character's characteristic/5 as the DM (drop fractions; the DM range is 0 to 3).

EXAMPLE: A character with gravitics-3 (skill DM of 3) and an education of 9 (characteristic DM of 1) would have a total DM of 4.

TIME: Indicates *one-tenth* of the average time required for the task attempt (successful or not). Roll 3D to determine the time duration; an average throw of 3D is 10.

Some tasks may have time omitted, in which case the task duration is assumed to be INSTANT and the time duration roll is ignored. Other tasks may state ABSOLUTE with the time; in this case, the task always takes the stated amount of time and no time roll is made.

To determine the actual duration of the task attempt, use the following method:

UTP time period x (3D – DMs) (the absolute minimum is 3 time periods)

EXAMPLE: A 3D roll of 15, minus a DM of 4 (as per the DM example) gives a modified roll of 11. For a UTP time period of 15 minutes, the task attempt is 165 minutes (2 hours, 45 minutes). The absolute minimum would be 3 time periods, or 45 minutes.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE TASK ATTEMPT FAILS

If the needed difficulty roll is not obtained, the task attempt is unsuccessful and has failed; roll on the failure table (table 2).

Die	*Failure Type*
2	reroll
3+	retry
7+	check determination
11+	mishap (2D)
15+	mishap (3D)

Table 2

ORDINARY TASK: Roll 2D on the failure table.
HAZARDOUS TASK: Roll 3D on the failure table.

FAILURE table results:
retry: the character failed the task, but can retry it again with no penalty.
check determination: the character failed the task, and must stay determined to retry the task without penalty. Staying determined is a special task with a UTP of:

DIFFICULT, end, int (endurance and intelligence combined represent a character's force of will)
REFEREE: If successful at staying determined, the character can retry the task with no penalty.
If not successful at staying determined, the character has two choices:

1. Retry the task immediately, but increase the difficulty one level
2. Retry the task at no increase in difficulty by waiting 10 times the actual duration of the failed task BEFORE retrying the task again.

NOTES: A FORMIDABLE task increased in difficulty becomes impossible, i.e. failure is permanent; no more retries are possible until circumstances change enough to allow a new UTP to be defined for the task.
JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES skill provides one free retry per level of skill (represents the character's resourcefulness).

mishap(2D): the character failed the task; roll 2D on the mishap table (table 3). After correcting the effects of the accident, the task reverts to check determination, should a retry be desired.
mishap(3D): same as mishap 2D, except roll 3D on the mishap table.

MISHAPS

If a mishap occurs from a roll on the failure table, roll the indicated number of dice (either 2D or 3D) on the mishap table (table 3).

Die	*MishapType*
2	reroll
3+	SUPERFICIAL (1D)
7+	MINOR (2D)
11+	MAJOR (3D)
15+	DESTROYED (4D)

Table 3

MISHAP table results:
SUPERFICIAL (1D): impose superficial damage on some device/vehicle involved in the task, and/or 1D wounds to the character.
MINOR (2D): as above, except impose minor damage and/or 2D wounds.
MAJOR (3D): as above, except impose major damage and/or 3D wounds.
DESTROYED (4D): as above, except impose destroyed damage and/or 4D wounds.

DAMAGE AND REPAIR

Whenever a device/vehicle is damaged, in the absence of detailed rules for diagnosis and repair:

1. Diagnose the problem. The standard diagnosis task is ROUTINE (uncertain); the referee must determine DMs and TIME.
2. Once the diagnosis task is successful, establish a UTP for performing the repairs based on the damage level, as per the table below:

DAMAGE AND REPAIR

Damage Level	*Operate?*	*Repair Task (shop)*	*Repair Cost (shop)*
SUPERFICIAL	Yes	SIMPLE	1D% of new price
MINOR	No	ROUTINE	1Dx1D% of new price
MAJOR	No	DIFFICULT	2Dx5% of new price
DESTROYED	No	FORMIDABLE	2Dx2Dx5% of new price

NOTES: Repairs can be made without a successful diagnosis at an additional cost multiplier of 1D (just replace the entire assembly if you can't figure out what's wrong).

For REPAIRS IN THE FIELD increase the task difficulty one level.
For LACK OF TOOLS increase the task difficulty one level.
For LACK OF SPARE PARTS increase the task difficulty one level. All difficulty increases are cumulative.

SUPERFICIAL damage affects appearance, but not function or operation.
Unrepaired damage levels above SUPERFICIAL are added together. Two MINOR damage mishaps become MAJOR damage. MINOR and MAJOR damage combined become DESTROYED.

If a device/vehicle has MAJOR damage that was repaired in the field (not yet taken into the shop), any task using that object is automatically hazardous (high risk of another breakdown). This lasts until the original MAJOR damage is totally repaired in the shop.

Knight Falls on Capital

The four adventurers settled into their accommodations on Capital, the location of the central government of the 11,000 worlds of the Imperium. The quarters were sumptuous, provided at Imperial expense.

But that didn't make the four any happier than birds in a gilded cage.

Dr. Krenstein was in his room with Aybee, his pseudobiological robot, making certain adjustments to Aybee's functioning.

Dur Telemon, the brave and stalwart Scout, was in the room, nervously listening to data being piped from the room's computer terminal into a commdot just behind his right ear.

Akidda sat in the corner, looking relaxed and slightly bemused at the frantic activities of the others.

"This sounds like a good one," Dur said. "Barnard's fever, recorded by the first Terran explorers on Barnard's Star."

"But you don't have a fever, Dur. They'd never believe it."

"Just a minute then, I'm still trying." His fingers rested on the terminal's keypad, and he pushed the small yellow button over and over with his thumb.

He cocked his head to one side suddenly and his face lit up. "I've got it! Fornolian dys-them-e-tri-o-sis." His brow furled as he stumbled over each syllable. "The last outbreak was on Shudusham 830 years ago. Difficult to detect in subjects without extensive quarantine period, and always fatal. No known cure."

"Sure, Dur," Akidda smirked. "Now all you have to do is learn to pronounce it."

"Thanks, Kidd. You could be more helpful, you know. Why aren't you more worried, anyway?"

"Because I don't have to hide from the big, bad Emperor and his evil guards to avoid being thrown in the tower dungeon."

"Oh, yeah? Then what are you going to do when Strephon finds out that the Duke of Deneb knighted a robot into the Order of the Emperor's Guard? You don't think he'll be angry? You don't think he's going to want the situation fixed right away? You don't think he's going to regret giving us Imperial space-required vouchers so we could fly first-class all the way here? You don't think he'll be embarrassed when the rest of the court finds out he knighted a hunk of tin?"

The doctor spoke up. "I'd appreciate it, Dur, if you wouldn't talk that way about Aybee when he's present. Besides, I think I've just about solved our problems here."

"You've got Aybee set to self-destruct? I mean, neither of you guys is taking this seriously enough. Strephon is not going to like being made a fool of."

Krenstein closed up the access panel on Aybee's chest. Looking at the robot now, there was no way to tell that his skin wasn't human, that only a moment ago one could see hyperceramic plastic and wires inside. "That ought to do it, Dur. Your worries are over," the doctor said.

"You mean he's human now?"

Akidda laughed from across the room.

"Don't be silly, Dur," Krenstein answered. "I've done a little reading on the palace, and it seems that they use radio badges to control access through the complex. That's no problem for the three of us, but Aybee would have difficulties. The badges, while worn, transmit not only their location, but also pick up the wearer's heartbeat. This prevents them from being removed while someone wanders around unattended."

"So you put a heart in Aybee?"

"Not exactly, Dur. As you know, Aybee already has a pump for his coolant, but it doesn't beat the way a real heart would. I just put a "noisemaker" in his chest. It emits a small electrical signal which should fool the Emperor's security badges."

"Sure, but how do you fool the rest of his security checks? All the lights on the panel are liable to light up for him."

"Don't worry, Dur. He's passed most of them so far, hasn't he? He doesn't have that much metal in him. And if he does fail, we can just explain that he lost an arm in a childhood accident, and has a prosthesis. That's always worked before."

"Yeah, speaking of arms. Suppose the guards find his laser. I don't think this will work, Doc. We're in big trouble."

"I disconnected his laser welder this morning. I can hook it back up as soon as we've met the Emperor and gone through with the ceremony."

"Well, I still say we should have hijacked that ship and headed for home. I've been in on some crazy stunts before, but this one is looking worse and worse. Those guards aren't likely the type to pussyfoot around."

Akidda got up and looked out the window, gazing at the Emperor's Palace and the Moot Spire twelve kilometers away. "You are worrying entirely too much, Dur. You don't see me sweating, do you?"

"No, you look pretty cool—too cool. What gives? You got something up your sleeve?"

"Sure," Akidda tried to hide a smile. "Take a good look at Aybee, Dur. Theodor did a pretty good job on him, didn't he?"

"Sure, Aybee's a beaut. What of it?"

"He fools almost everybody, doesn't he?"

"You're the only guy I know that ever caught on that he was a robot without being told."

"No, I didn't, Dur."

"You mean someone had told you?"

"No, I mean that I never knew he was a robot."

"What do you mean, you didn't know? There in the starport restaurant, dark as it was—and you knew right off. I remember how surprised Krenstein was that you noticed."

"I don't remember that at all, Dur. I've thought Aybee was human all along. And if Strephon finds out otherwise, I'll be as surprised as he will be."

Dur's eyes opened wide and his jaw dropped. "Hey, this is great! I always knew my old uncle had more brains than he let on. What a load off my mind."

Krenstein looked from Dur to Akidda and shook his head. "You two never cease to amaze me. I hate to disappoint you, but your scheme will not work."

Aybee spoke up. "It does seem logical, Dr. Krenstein, but I also see your point. While the professed ignorance on the part of Dur and Akidda serves as a sufficient excuse for them, there is no way for you to escape blame in the same way."

"You're half right, Aybee. I won't get away with it. But Dur and Akidda won't get away with it, either. Do they know that you're a robot?"

"Of course they do, Doctor."

"And how do you know they know, Aybee? Give a complete explanation, from the data level."

"I know they know, because node G8TF4, among others, contains holographic data recording--oh, I see your point, Doctor."

"So you see, gentlemen, if the Emperor does find out that Aybee's a robot, it will not be difficult for him to also ascertain that all three of us were well aware of that fact."

Dur looked dismayed, but then had an idea. "Doc, there's still a way out. Why don't you just erase...Uh, never mind. Sorry I even mentioned it. But what are we going to do?"

Doctor Krenstein shrugged. "I don't really know, Dur. We've faced tough situations before. I'm afraid we'll just have to face this one, too."

"I guess so, Doc. But my throat sure feels dry."

"You're not really that nervous, are you, Dur?"

"Me? Nervous? Of course not. I just think I'm coming down with Fornolian whatever-it-is."

Referee's Synopsis

The characters have spent three years getting to Capital, where they are scheduled to meet Emperor Strephon for a formal knighting ceremony. The characters are worried, however, because the robot, AB-101, was mistakenly knighted when the other three adventurers were. When the emperor finds out about this error, he is not likely to be pleased.

When the characters meet the emperor, they are in for a surprise from his attitude. He also has a special assignment for them, to arrange a surprise birthday party for his daughter. In the course of doing so, the characters meet a variety of nobles and stumble upon a kidnapping plot, which with any luck they will quash.

One note about this adventure is in order: it is important that you read all of the **Traveller** material in this issue of the magazine to be able to handle the situation well. In terms of length, it appears that this adventure is the shortest we have ever printed. In fact, by including the subsidiary articles, it is actually the longest. As there are detailed articles on the emperor, the Imperial Palace, the palace guards, and nobles, these issues are only brushed upon in this writeup for the adventure.

This issue of the *Travellers' Digest* also marks a turning point in **Traveller**. The rules are being revised and expanded, to be issued shortly by Game Designers' Workshop under the **MegaTraveller** name. Simultaneously, the arena in which characters act is also undergoing an important change. In this adventure, the characters finally get a chance to meet Emperor Strephon face to face, a dramatic incident in anyone's life.

In the companion adventure in this issue, occurring on Capital 12 years later, Emperor Strephon is suddenly shot down by Dulinor, Archduke of Ilelish, who claims the throne by right of assassination. If you lead your players through both adventures (with different characters, of course), they will have a chance to see up close the swirling events which surround the intrigue leading up to Strephon's death and the ensuing civil war.

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN...

When the characters reach the Cleon Starport, they are met by Eneri Balan, a protocol clerk connected with the Imperial Palace. Eneri explains that he has been dispatched by the Protocol Office to see to it that the four knights enjoy their visit to Capital and the emperor. He is "on call" 24 hours a day, and will also teach the characters the protocol they must know to properly meet the emperor.

Arrangements have already been made for the four to stay (at no cost to them) at the Empress Hotel, an establishment known for its grand style and sumptuous accommodations. Eneri sees to it that the characters' luggage is taken to the hotel and transportation from the starport to the hotel is provided.

Once the characters are settled into their rooms at the Empress, they may discuss ways of avoiding the Imperial audience. You must do your best to thwart these efforts. If the characters should decide, for example, to go through with the ceremony, but to leave Aybee at the hotel on some pretense, Eneri will explain that this would go against protocol, and that the ceremony can be postponed for a short time so that all four characters can officially receive their knighthoods at the same ceremony.

The characters may also be concerned that Aybee's true identity as a robot would be revealed by security scanners at the palace. This is a valid concern, but can be dealt with if the players are clever.

Dr. Krenstein, for example, might make use of the library data computers in the hotel to try to determine the extensiveness of the palace security. Ordinary information can be obtained with no real difficulty or danger. Breaking through to high-level material, however, requires a successful task roll.

To get detailed information on palace security:
DIFFICULT, computer, int, 1 hour (uncertain, hazardous)
REFEREE: Remember that robotics skill can be used as the next lower level of computer skill, so if Dr. Krenstein attempts this task he should have little trouble succeeding. If both rolls fail, however, the Imperial Palace will be alerted to this attempted breach. No formal action will be taken, but Strephon is likely to mention it when he meets the characters.

Palace security is fairly conventional, but is tighter at some access points than others. Normal tourist-type visitors are scanned in the air/raft station on the ground below before being taken to the palace. These scanners use grav-shielded densitometers with a scan resolution of 1 cm. Complete details on this device's capabilities can be found in *Grand Survey*; for purposes of this scenario, suffice it to say that any such scan would immediately show that Aybee is a robot.

Whether this would be a problem remains to be seen. In fact, many robots do travel to and from the palace for various purposes, and another robot might get by. Krenstein can discover that the security scan is fully automated, and the system should not be surprised at the fact that a certain robot is pseudo-biological in nature as long as no other readings are irregular.

A "sniffer" scan is also taken, as detailed in *Travellers' Digest Adventure 4* and *Grand Census*. This scan will also detect the mechanical nature of Aybee, but again should not register an alarm if the characters are lucky. The main purpose for the sniffer scan is to detect explosives and poisons.

The characters may decide to make a trial run of their entrance, posing as regular tourists and attempting to get into the palace that way. This will succeed without any problems.

THE GRAND TOUR

Eneri will also extend an invitation for a special guided tour for any of the characters who wish to take one. No security alarms will be raised in this circumstance, either, and the special tour will take the characters to many areas that are off limits to the regular tourist. Use the palace map and article in playing out either tour for the characters.

While on the tour, the characters will also see the changing of the guard. This impressive display is widely attended by tourists with all manner of cameras and holorecorders. At least one changing of the guard should involve an Aslan regiment, just so your players will realize that such a regiment exists. Its role in history is clarified in the other adventure in this issue.

...INTO THE FIRE

When the characters do finally relent to seeing the emperor, a scheduled time is planned and Eneri escorts them up into the palace. He has already briefed the characters on Imperial protocol (no jewelry is to be worn on the head or face in the Emperor's presence; the emperor is never to be addressed as "Strephon", but always as "Your Imperial Highness", and so on), and instructed them in the basic mechanics of the ceremony.

They will enter the throne room, approach the emperor, and stop at the foot of the marble stairs. Emperor Strephon will then rise, knight them, and they will depart. The entire cere-

mony is recorded by holographic cameras; copies of the ceremony will be given to each of the characters, for the pleasure of friends and family who could not attend.

When the characters do step into the throne room, they are given a rare glimpse of an important historical event. Ahead of them, speaking in muted tones to the emperor, is a man they instantly recognize as the Duke of Regina, who rules over that subsector in the Spinward Marches. In front of two of the walls are three-dimensional maps of the border regions between the Spinward Marches and the Zhodani Consulate, with various worlds color-coded in some way.

If the characters strain their ears hard enough, they will hear what the duke is saying. "Second, more personally I humbly request that Your Imperial Highness grant me the authority to lead this defense of my territory. With the influx of Imperial troops and squadrons, there will naturally be gaggles of admirals gravitating to centers of action and power.

"...many of the nobles on Capital would not be pleased to find out that a robot had been knighted."

"With the potential for normal channels of authority breaking down, I ask that I be named supreme commander of all forces on the frontier, that I might continue to direct the defense I've already begun." The emperor looks thoughtful and more than a little stern for a few moments, then waves his hand and the duke fades from view. The Duke of Regina has not travelled all of this distance, but has instead sent a pseudo-reality computer to make the request for him in the person of a holographic image, as is commonly done in dealings with the emperor. After the duke is gone, Strephon looks at the two maps for a few moments, waves his arm again, and they slowly fade from view.

It is unlikely that any of the characters should realize what has just occurred, but your players may enjoy this "behind the scenes" look at history. The Fifth Frontier War will begin in a few short years, and Strephon has just agreed to send warships, under the duke's command, to the Spinward Marches to defend the Imperial borders. It will not hurt to explain the significance of this scenario in more detail to your players if they do not immediately catch on to it.

FACE TO FACE

Before the party approaches the Emperor's throne, the Duke of Deneb steps through a side door and goes ahead of them. He states to the emperor a brief synopsis of the affair the characters had with the Zhodani spy ring (see *Travellers' Digest Adventure 1* for complete details) and asks that they be inducted into the Order of the Emperor's Guard for this service. Strephon thanks the duke for bringing this matter to his attention, and gladly assents. "Step forward, please," he says to the characters. If the party is attentive, one of them might notice that the Duke of Deneb also "zaps out", as he is again only a pseudo-reality holographic image.

When they have reached the base of the throne, a page enters from the left carrying a sword on a red pillow. The emperor rises, walks down the steps, and takes the sword, whereupon the page turns and walks away. The pillow remains floating a few feet above the floor (thanks to a grav plate) and the page instantly vanishes (another holograph—the players should start getting used to this by now).

The emperor grasps the sword, and begins to lower it toward Dr. Krenstein's shoulder when he is suddenly startled. "Oh, excuse me, you're actually here," he says. "Please allow me to begin again. I wasn't expecting to meet you all face to face. We'll edit out the first part of this."

He then knights each character in turn, tapping each shoulder with the flat of the sword, and intoning, "For service to the Imperium and to myself, I hereby induct you into the Order of the Emperor's Guard, Sir Theodor Krenstein." He knights each character in turn, saying his full name as appropriate.

In order, he knights Krenstein, Akidda, Dur, and finally Aybee. When he speaks Aybee's name, he pronounces it, slowly and carefully, as "Sir A. B. One hundred and one", not as "Sir Aybee Wan Owen". The emperor then turns and walks back up the stairs, seating himself again on his iridium throne. If you've built up to this situation properly, your players should realize at this point that their goose is cooked.

Give the players a moment or two to think over the situation before proceeding. The characters should be the next to speak, rather than the emperor. Only after hearing their excuses and apologies (and perhaps some bald-faced lies) should you allow Strephon to speak again, with sternness in his voice. "I have only two questions for you, Dr. Krenstein," the emperor says. "First, how much did that robot cost?" Once Krenstein has answered (about Cr12,000,000 in value, but a lot of the work was done by grad students for nothing), Strephon asks his second question.

"Can you make one that looks like me, so I can spend more time sailing?" At this point, the players should breathe a heavy sigh of relief. In fact, Strephon's agents have known that Aybee was a robot since before the four characters were knighted by the Duke of Deneb. Strephon is pleased by Krenstein's technological success, and is sincerely interested in his further progress during his reign.

Meanwhile, Strephon has this little tidbit of knowledge to spring on the duke when he needs a favor from him. The duke would be embarrassed if news go out, and Strephon wants the characters to continue keeping the secret for him. Besides, many of the nobles on Capital would not be as pleased as Strephon himself is to find out that a robot had been knighted. For the characters' own benefit, it would be better if they continue their charade until they get back home to the Spinward Marches.

The emperor is more than willing to spend a few minutes explaining this situation to the characters. He then thanks them for coming to Capital, and excuses them from his presence.

THE SPECIAL MISSION

After the characters have gotten about halfway across the room, Strephon suddenly calls out to them, bidding them return. He presses his left armrest in a certain way, and then steps down from the throne. "I think I have something for you to do if you like. This would be a dangerous undertaking, one you would have to accomplish entirely by yourselves, without any assistance from me, in the utmost secrecy."

If the characters are interested, the emperor explains. His daughter, Princess Ciencia, is about to have her sixteenth birthday, and the emperor wants to throw a surprise party for her. The characters are to arrange this; no help or coordination of plans can come from the palace or the empress and the princess would discover the plans. The emperor himself will see to it that his wife and daughter accompany him to Nabi Island, where the party will be held. The characters are to make all other arrangements, including providing food, entertainment, and guests. The guest list is a small one, but does include Isis, Dulinor's daughter.

Lady Isis and Princess Ciencia happen to have been born on the same day, although trillions of miles apart from each other. As both are noble, and Dulinor's affairs as a noble often bring him (with his family) to Capital, the two girls have grown up to be close friends. As soon as Isis knows of the birthday party, she is likely to blab to Ciencia; the characters will have

to discover a way around this on their own if they intend the party to remain a surprise.

WHAT NEXT?

From this point, the adventure can take one of several courses, depending upon the desires of the players and the referee. A few incidents of local color, to provide a better picture of the Imperial court and the archduke, Dulinor, can be played out. If the players can not be made interested in planning out the birthday party, it can be skipped entirely and the adventure correspondingly shortened. If the players do agree to plan out the party, it can be played straight, allowing the characters to deal only with the inherent difficulties of orchestrating such an affair, or additional spice can be woven into the scenario by allowing the characters to stumble upon a plot against Isis, Dulinor's daughter.

In any case, the characters should plan to attend the formal reception for Dulinor and his family. There they will be given an opportunity to see the archduke together with the emperor, and also to meet many of the nobles on Capital. The reception is held several evenings after the characters' audience with Strephon, in one of the larger rooms in the Imperial Palace.

Use some of the NPCs given below, and generate others as you think necessary, to give your players an impression of Dulinor. As noted in the interview with Strephon in this issue, most of the nobility opposes Dulinor's appointment. A typical overheard comment is the following: "Dulinor is really a very intelligent man. His motivation is that he just wants to cut through everything and get the job done, and I can't fault him for that. I just think that he listens to the wrong people, that's all. Right now, I think he believes I'm part of the problem rather than part of the solution, and I wish I could convince him otherwise, but that's his problem."

Other nobles are discussing the attempt against Dulinor's life that was exposed a few weeks earlier. An air/raft driver accidentally hit a man using a grav belt; the victim fell to the ground and was killed. Ordinarily, this could not happen on Capital, since flyers use EMS signals to warn each other away. When the body was recovered, it was found that he had explosives and a map of Dulinor's quarters. Police were able to follow up these clues, and arrested several other conspirators, but no motive was found for the apparent scheme.

If you decide to use the plot against Isis, make sure that there are enough red herrings thrown into these conversations to mislead the players as to who the plotters might be. Just because someone is politically opposed to Dulinor does not mean that that person is plotting to kidnap his daughter.

At the reception, none of the Imperial family or Dulinor's family is present at first. After an hour or so of conversations and hobnobbing, a trumpet sounds and a page announces the emperor. A door on one side of the room opens, and Strephon enters accompanied by Iolanthe and an honor guard from the Antares Guard regiment. He steps up onto a platform against the wall, and seats himself in a chair provided. His wife sits to his left.

Another trumpet sounds, and the page announces Dulinor of Dlan, Archduke of the Ilelish Domains. He and his wife, Jessica, and his daughter, Isis, enter the room with their own honor guard. This is an impressive sight, as all members of the party are dressed entirely in black. Dulinor is young and handsome, Jessica is older and not at all attractive, while Isis is young and stunningly beautiful. Dulinor himself is armed with a *large* handgun, his wife has a sword, and the rest of the honor guard are all armed with various weaponry, as is customary for Dlani military regalia.

Dulinor and his family sit to the right of the emperor. The crowd applauds politely, and the emperor and the archduke chat for a few minutes with each other. The two entourages then get up and are escorted from the room with appropriate pomp. Neither the characters nor any other guests at the reception are given a chance to talk with any of the honorees.

THE KIDNAP

If you decide to use the kidnaping as an extra subplot for this adventure, it can be easy to implement it in the following way. The emperor sends the characters a private message, saying that the kidnapping sounds like a good way to get Lady Isis to the birthday celebration, but that the characters should be careful: if his agents can discover the plot, so might his wife and daughter, spoiling the surprise. Fortunately, the emperor writes, he has called off the authorities so that the characters can carry out the kidnapping without interference. This should get your players worried again.

If they then try to notify the emperor, they receive no sign that he received their message. They will have to stop the kidnapping themselves. The culprits are old foes of Dulinor, from his homeworld of Dlan, and are in fact the same ones who tried to kill him earlier. You must leave enough clues around that your players can figure out how to stop the kidnapping; the easiest way out is to go to Dulinor, who is certainly more approachable than is the emperor, and warn him directly. His bodyguards, once warned, will have no difficulty in preventing any harm from befalling his daughter.

In any case, even if the characters fail in stopping the kidnaping from occurring, Isis must not be harmed, as she is likely to have future importance in the Imperium.

"...most of the nobility opposes Dulinor's appointment."

NPCs FOR THE ADVENTURE

(Note: These NPCs were generated using the prior service career rules in ***MegaTraveller***).

EMPEROR STREPHON

At the time our characters visit him in 1104:
Emperor (Noble) 768ABF Age 54
Admin-5, Leader-4, Persuasion-1, Linguistics-1, History-1, Artisan-1, Small Watercraft-1
Homeworld=A, Medium, Dense, Wet, Hi Pop, Hi Law, Hi Stellar (Capital)

More information about Strephon's personality and background can be found in the rest of this issue.

EMPRESS IOLANTHE

Empress (Noble) 48BB8F Age 52
Computer-3, Leader-2, Liaison-1, Medical-1
Homeworld=A, Medium, Dense, Wet, Hi Pop, Hi Law, Hi Stellar (Capital)

Iolanthe is Strephon's wife.

PRINCESS CIENCIA IPHEGENIA

Grand Princess (Noble) 5749BF Age 15

The princess is a close friend to Lady Isis; they share the same birthday.

DULINOR, ARCHDUKE OF ILELISH

At his appointment in 1104:
Archduke (Noble) 898CBF Age 38
Admin-3, Leader-3, Handgun-4, Bribery-1
Homeworld=A, Large, Exotic, Dry, Hi Pop, Ext Law, Hi Stellar (Dlan)

The archduke is known for his interest in handguns—which is not uncommon for nobles from the militant world of Dlan. At short range, Dulinor is a crack shot.

More information on Dlan, Dulinor's homeworld, can be found in the adventure *Lion At Bay*.

JESSICA, ARCHDUCHESS OF ILELISH

Archduchess (Noble) 896BAF Age 50
Computer-3, Linguistics-2, J-o-T-1, Persuasion-1, Robotics-1, Foil-1
Homeworld=A, Large, Exotic, Dry, Hi Pop, Ext Law, Hi Stellar (Dlan)

Jessica is Dulinor's wife. She is older than Dulinor, but comes from a powerful Dlani noble family, and is well liked by her husband.

LADY ISIS

Archduchess (Noble) 7D667F Age 15
Homeworld=A, Large, Exotic, Dry, Hi Pop, Ext Law, Hi Stellar (Dlan)

Isis is the daughter of Dulinor and Jessica. She is regarded on her homeworld as one of the most beautiful women in the Imperium, and most who meet her could quickly be converted to this view. While Jessica's clothing tends to look drab, Lady Isis's attire demonstrates conclusively that black clothing can be fashionable and attractive.

JERVY

Ex-court juggler (Noble) 7B7B7B Age 30
3 terms Cr 800
Foil-2, Disguise-2

Jervy was part of the court entertainment at Dulinor's palace on Dlan, but was let go when it was discovered that he had been "borrowing" items from the household. He is a Virasin, and is understandably terrified about being offworld; only his desire for revenge against Dulinor has brought him to Capital.

ENERI BALAN

Protocol Clerk (Bureaucrat) 324795 Age 46
7 terms Cr 2,900
Admin-3, Recruiting-3, Liaison-2, Leader-2, Interrogation-1, Computer-1, Carousing-1, Persuasion-1

Eneri Balan is the protocol clerk assigned to the four new knights. He will cooperate with them as much as he can, but he will not break the law for them or tolerate their breaking it.

BARON LII MAKKIIR

Poet Laureate (Noble) 376ABC Age 50
8 terms Cr 62,000
Linguistics-5, Artisan-3, J-o-T-2, History-2, Medical-2, Leader-1, Liaison-1

Lii Makkiir was chosen as Imperial Poet Laureate by Emperor Strephon four years ago; the post carries with it the rank of Baron and a small barony on Capital. Makkiir is currently working on an epic ode, relating the life of Strephon and the progress of the Imperium in the 33 years of his reign as of 1104.

WORLD PROFILE

1. Date of Preparation: 175-1104

2. World Name: Capital

3. Location: Core 2118

4. UPP: A 5 8 6 A 9 8 F

PHYSICAL DATA

Data describing the world's basic physical attributes in more detail.

5. Diameter: 7,652 km

6. Density: 1.1 standard

7. Mass: 0.27 standard

8. Mean Surface Gravity: 0.69 g

9. Rotation Period: 24 hrs 4 min 1 sec

10. Orbital Period: 364.97 days

11. Seasons (*list*): 4 standard seasons, 90 days each

12. Axial Tilt: 20° 32' 5"

13. Orbital Eccentricity: 0.0

14. Satellites: none

15. Surface Atmospheric Pressure: 2.2 atm

16. Atmospheric Composition: Standard oxygen-nitrogen mix

16a. Atmospheric Terraforming? ☐ Yes ☒ No

17. Hydrographic Percentage: 60%

18. Hydrographic Composition: Water

18a. Hydrographic Terraforming? ☒ Yes ☐ No

TEMPERATURE

Data concerning world surface temperature and various modifiers.

19. Base Mean Surface Temperature: 27.2°C

20. Axial Tilt Modifiers: +12°C, -20°C

21. Rotation Modifiers: +4.8°C, -6.0°C

22. Latitude Modifiers: ±5°C per hex row

23. Orbital Eccentricity Modifiers: 0°C

24a. Weather Control? ☒ Yes ☐ No
24b. Greenhouse Effect Terraforming? ☐ Yes ☒ No
24c. Albedo Terraforming? ☐ Yes ☒ No

25. Other Modifiers: none

MAPPING DATA

Data describing the details of a world's makeup which affect world mapping.

26. Num. of Tectonic Plates: 4

27a. Native Life? ☒ Yes ☐ No
27b. Terrain Terraforming? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Minor Human Race

28. Major Continents: 5

29. Minor Continents: 1 — 5 major islands, 9 archipelagoes

30. Major Oceans: world

31. Minor Oceans: world

32. World Name: Capital

SEISMIC DATA

Data indicating the relative likelihood of seismic activity.

33. Stress Factor: 6

34. Notable Volcanoes: 0

RESOURCES

Data indicating the presence of resources of various kinds.

35. Natural Resources (*list*): Agricultural, Ores, Radioactives, Petrochemicals

36. Processed Resources (*list*): Agricultural, Alloys, Agroproducts

37. Manufactured Products (*list*): Weapons, Mech Parts, Heavy Equip, Electronics

POPULATION & PORTS

Describe the world's population centers and space facilities in detail.

38. World Population: 56,800,000,000

39. Primary Cities (*list name, population, and starport type*):

Benca, circa 6 billion, class A

Cleon, circa 4 billion, class A

Mifa Lanco,circa 3 billion,class A

Turthu,circa 9 billion,class B

Ton Vorn,circa 5 billion,class A
(orbital complex)

40. Secondary Cities (*list number of cities, their population level, and their typical spaceport type*):

28 cities, circa 500 million, type F spaceports

41. Tertiary Cities (*list number of cities, their population level, and their typical spaceport type*):

135 cities, circa 50 million, type H spaceports

CULTURAL PROFILE

1. Date of Preparation: 175-1104

2. World/Government Name: Capital/Core 2118

PROGRESSIVENESS

Attitude	*Action*
☐ Radical	☐ Enterprising
☐ Progressive	☐ Advancing
☒ Conservative	☒ Indifferent
☐ Reactionary	☐ Stagnant

AGGRESSIVENESS

Attitude	*Action*
☐ Expansionistic	☐ Militant
☐ Competetive	☐ Neutral
☒ Unaggressive	☒ Peaceable
☐ Passive	☐ Conciliatory

EXTENSIVENESS

Global	*Interstellar*
☐ Monolithic	☐ Xenophilic
☒ Harmonious	☒ Friendly
☐ Discordant	☐ Aloof
☐ Fragmented	☐ Xenophobic

EXPORTS

Natural Resources
- ☐ Agricultural
- ☒ Ores
- ☒ Radioactives
- ☐ Gems & Crystals
- ☒ Petrochemicals

Processed Resources
- ☒ Agricultural
- ☒ Alloys
- ☒ Agroproducts

Manufactured Resources
- ☒ Weapons
- ☒ Mechanical Parts
- ☒ Heavy Equipment
- ☒ Electronics
- ☐ Gravitics

TECHNOLOGY PROFILE

High	Low	Energy	Computers/Robotics	Communications	Medical	Environment	Land	Water	Air	Space	Personal Military	Heavy Military	Novelty
F	E	E	F	F	G	E	E	E	E	F	E	F	G
Common		Quality of Life					Transportation				Military		

Achievement Tech Levels

Notes on Technology:

Capital's tech level 16 medical technology comes from recent successes with brain transplants.

IS Form 22 Cultural Profile Form

3. Government Code and Description: Capital

GOVERNMENT DIVISION OF AUTHORITY

☐ Executive	☒ Executive	☐ Executive
☒ Legislative	☐ Legislative	☐ Legislative
☐ Judicial	☐ Judicial	☒ Judicial
☐ Ruler	☐ Ruler	☐ Ruler
☐ Elite Council	☒ Elite Council	☐ Elite Council
☒ Several Councils	☐ Several Councils	☒ Several Councils
☐ Demos	☐ Demos	☐ Demos

DETAILED LAW LEVELS (optional)

Overall	Weapons	Trade	Criminal Law	Civil Law	Pers. Freedom

UNIFORMITY OF LAW

- ☐ Undivided
- ☒ Territorial
- ☐ Personal

RELIGIOUS PROFILE (optional)

God View	Spiritual Aim	Devotion Req.	Organization	Lit. Formality	Mission. Fervor	Nbr. Adherents

Notes on Religion:

Notes on Culture:

Local customs:

Unusual food for men.
There is a certain fish native to Capital that men find delicious, but women find tasteless. All the best restaurants serve the fish, which is considered a great delicacy. Scientists find that the male chromosomes cause this effect.

Children live at school.
Because of the crowded conditions on many areas of Capital, it is a common practice to send children to a boarding school at a very early age.

IS Form 22 (Reverse) Cultural Profile Form

Lion At Bay

A MegaTraveller Scenario

—by Gary L. Thomas

Game Designers' Workshop will shortly be issuing a new edition of the **Traveller** rules. The game rules will be consolidated into three basic reference books. Besides this updating and revision, some events are occurring in the **Traveller** universe which further open up adventure possibilities. While the rules are not yet available at this time, it is possible to explore some of the options of this new universe using the original rules. We at Digest Group Publications are proud to present here the first **MegaTraveller** adventure incorporating these new events.

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place on Capital in the spring of 1116. The characters are four to ten crew members of an Aslan trade vessel, caught up in events over which they have no control. The characters have travelled to Capital from the Aslan Hierate as part of a trade mission, meant to further interstellar trade between the Third Imperium and the Aslan Hierate. The characters are members of the Yerlyaruiwo clan, the most powerful of the 29 Aslan clans. It is assumed that the characters are fluent in both Aslan and Galanglic, the official language of the Imperium. It is recommended that the Aslan characters be generated by the one-year system, in order to produce more robust skills and characteristics.

The trade vessel, the *Eirlakh (Starshine)*, is a *Khtukhao* class clan transport vessel refitted to comfortably carry 8 important passengers, the members of the trade mission, including the ambassador from the Yerlyaruiwo. The ship is armed, and otherwise carried only a small cargo of Aslan goods, meant as goodwill gifts and samples of products from the Hierate. The pilot of the *Eirlakh* should have pilot-5.

Once the characters reached Capital, the bigwigs aboard took a shuttle to the surface, piloted by another crew member. The trade meetings will not begin for a few days, and the characters, now aboard their ship, are free to make use of their spare time in whatever fashion they wish. When the meetings are over, the delegation will return to the ship, which will then begin its long journey back to the Hierate, perhaps with a successful trade agreement in hand.

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

The Aslan Yerlyaruiwo delegation has happened to choose a time period at Capital which is of utmost importance to the future history of the Imperium and the worlds it contains. While there, the Emperor is apparently assassinated by another noble, and anti-Aslan sentiment flares high in Cleon, the city which is the home of the Imperial Palace.

Not only is the trade delegation in limbo, but the shuttle pilot is being held in a local jail for a traffic violation in Cleon airspace. The characters, to survive, must find their companions and flee the system before the military can act to stop outgoing vessels.

FUN ON CAPITAL

The characters can play the part of typical tourists; for this, use the information found in the rest of this issue, tempered by the special interests Aslan characters would have. They may be interested in seeing the Aslan Regiment at the Imperial Palace during the changing of the guard ceremony, for example. Whatever the characters decide to do, two events are important to them: first, their companion has been arrested by local authorities for driving without an autopilot and is being held; second, the trade mission will meet the emperor on the afternoon of 132.

In the case of the shuttle pilot, his crime is a minor one, and the trade delegation has filed a formal protest asking for his release to the ambassador. This request is being looked into by the authorities.

NEWS BULLETINS

While the characters are going about their business on Capital on 132, they should be in a place in which they will hear or see the following news stories. Switching channels will provide roughly the same coverage no matter which station is chosen. Each bulletin below is preceded by the time (by military clock) and station name.

1536, CHS (Capital Holography System): "We interrupt our regularly scheduled program to bring you this bulletin. Smoke has erupted from the Imperial Palace about 10 minutes ago. We have no word yet from palace spokesmen on the reason for this, but local authorities are advising citizens to avoid the area until more is known about this situation. Our reporters are on their way to the scene, and we will have live coverage as soon as possible."

1536, IPNS (Imperial Palace News Service): IPNS is still broadcasting a documentary, "Our Friends the Aslan", which began at 1500.

1545, CHS: "We have some more news about the situation at the Imperial Palace this afternoon. Smoke is continuing to pour from the palace, and we have unconfirmed reports of outbreaks of fighting on the ground involving Imperial Guard regiments. Emperor Strephon was scheduled this afternoon to hold a reception between the Aslan ambassador and a group of Imperial nobles to discuss means of improving trade conditions between the Imperium and the Aslan Hierate. We are still trying to contact the Palace Information Office, but our calls are not being returned. Our news team reported a few minutes ago that they had reached the perimeter of the palace by ground transportation, but we do not yet have a linkup with them."

1550, IPNS: IPNS's broadcast now consists of the Imperial sunburst emblem. Serious music is playing in the background.

1556, CHS: "The Imperial Palace has reported through a spokesman that a bank of anti-gravity modules beneath the palace has failed, and although there is no immediate danger of the palace falling to the ground, authorities ask that all citizens avoid the area if at all possible while emergency crews are working. The Palace Information Office also says that the emergency grav modules in the palace are responding to the failure, but the overload has evidently started a small fire within the palace, and some gases are being vented into the atmosphere. Again, there is no danger, but they ask that everyone avoid the palace at this time. Scheduled tours and events there are being postponed until further notice, and the palace is being evacuated as quickly as possible. We have

no word on casualties, but the Emperor and his family evidently are safe. Our news team on the scene is still trying to transmit to us, but we are experiencing technical difficulties at this time. Our backup film crew, enroute in a speeder, was turned back at 1,000 km and has not been able to approach. The Palace Information Office has not confirmed or denied reports of fighting on the ground beneath the palace, and we do not yet know what caused the failure of the grav support system for the facility."

1610, IPNS: IPNS's broadcast now consists of Emperor Strephon's family crest and the same serious music, interspersed with a voiceover asking that citizens avoid the area of the palace until further notice.

1612, CHS: "We have an update on the palace emergency. Our first news crew has not reported in since we lost contact with them, and evidently some type of radio jamming equipment is operating in the area, so we really don't know what's going on yet. We do know that red alert for the palace has been issued, and our second film crew, enroute in a speeder, was turned back at 1,000 km as we reported earlier. The Palace Information Office stands by its earlier statement that a bank of antigravity modules gave out, and that no emergency exists, but they refuse to confirm or deny that Imperial Guard regiments are active."

1618, CHS: "Ladies and gentlemen, we do have confirmed reports now of ground fighting at the Imperial Palace, along with still photographs of part of the scene. We don't yet know why the fighting is occurring, nor do we have details of which side is winning, we don't actually know what the sides are. What we have, there, you see it now appearing from our studios, are ground shots taken from space, from an orbiting vessel that we will not name yet. There, now you see the palace, up in the upper left corner you can see part of Paulo's Annex, and there below on the ground you can see blast marks and what looks like some wrecked vehicles. The large grey region on the right is the remains of the ground receiving station; if any of you ever toured the palace, you'll remember going through that building to board an air/raft that took you up. As far as we can tell from these photographs, which have been computer enhanced by our technicians, the building is entirely destroyed. You can also see some smaller red and black spots in the picture; we're not sure yet, but we believe that these are some of the Emperor's guards and their opponents in the fighting. We have tried to contact the palace for a statement, but they refuse to respond to our inquiries."

1624, CHS: "We've just received a statement from the Palace Information Office that the situation there is under control, and we're preparing to receive a special broadcast from them. Local authorities report that—just a moment, ladies and gentlemen, I guess we're ready for that transmission now."

(The Imperial sunburst fills the picture, then Emperor Strephon appears and begins to speak): "Citizens of the Imperium, I come to you tonight because I want you to remain calm. An accident here at the Imperial Palace has thrown things into a turmoil, but certain elements are exaggerating the danger from this accident and making the situation worse. Our crews are working as hard as possible to correct the situation, and we urge citizens not to panic. The situation is well under control and there is no danger to anyone outside the palace. As we learn more, my spokesmen will keep you informed, but for now, I want you to stay at home and await further word. Thank you and good night."

(The announcer reappears.): "That report direct from the Imperial Palace. As I was just beginning to say, ladies and gentlemen, reports from local authorities indicate that small outbreaks of rioting are occurring in the vicinity of the palace, and police are moving to break these up. Citizens are urged to stay away from the area if at all possible, until the situation has—what? Just a moment, please." (The announcer tilts his head to one side and presses a finger against his ear, brow furled.): "Ladies and gentlemen, we don't know what's going on, but computer analysis has just shown that the broadcast we have just witnessed was not the emperor but was rather a pseudo-reality simulation. This in itself is not unusual for ordinary announcements, but we were told specifically by palace spokesmen that the emperor himself would be speaking to us tonight. We don't know why the pseudo-reality simulation was used, and we're not yet sure if this is significant in any way."

1624, IPNS plays somber music, interspersed with the above speech by the emperor.

1640, CHS: "Ladies and gentlemen, we now have a crew on the scene at the Imperial Palace, and we are awaiting word from them on the situation there. Reports are that radio transmissions in the area are still being jammed, we don't know by whom or why, but we are using beam laser transmission to bring this special report to you. We will not, I'm afraid, be providing you with any video coverage at this time; evidently, there is still heavy fighting on the ground from time to time, and our crew would be endangering itself if it announced its position by showing pictures from its hidden location. We are recording pictures, however, and these will be broadcast to you as soon as safely practicable.

1725, CHS, (announcer appears visibly shaken): "Ladies and gentlemen, we have some tragic news to report to you at this time. We have just received a transmission from what is evidently a space-bound vessel with holographic recordings of the scene in the emperor's throne room just a few hours ago. Our technicians are analyzing this recording, and so far all indications are that it is genuine, I'm afraid. It—" (the announcer's voice chokes with emotion) "—excuse me a moment, ladies and gentlemen, as I was saying—" (another choke, tears are obviously welling up in his eyes) "—the recordings show the assassination of Emperor Strephon and his family, at close range, by Dulinor, the Archduke of Ilelish. After the shootings, Dulinor took Strephon's crown and scepter, sat on the throne, and spoke as follows, and I quote, 'I hereby proclaim myself Dulinor I, Emperor of the 11,000 worlds of the Third Imperium, by right of assassination. All

"I hereby proclaim myself Dulinor I, Emperor of the 11,000 worlds of the Third Imperium...all loyal citizens shall hear me and obey."

loyal citizens shall hear me and obey,' end quote."

"Such recordings of the throne room are typically made, but we do not yet know how this one was beamed to us from space, nor anything else of its origins. This could, of course, be a hoax, but something is definitely going on at the palace. We have the first reports from our ground crew now, live at the scene."

(Woman announcer's voice, with occasional sounds of gunfire and explosions in background): "The sight we are seeing now beneath the Imperial Palace is a terrible one. Fighting evidently broke out between various contingents of Strephon's troops here a little more than an hour ago. So far, we have been able to identify members of the Aslan Guard and the Ilelish Guard, as well as vehicular support squads of the Sylean Guard. We don't yet know if any other contingents are involved, and we don't yet know why they're fighting. Incidentally, we have spotted the wreckage of some of our network equipment, but there is no sign of our first news team here on the field of battle. I would estimate military casualties to be about 80 guards, that is, I can count about 80 bodies from here, and then there are another 60 or 70 bodies that appear to be civilians, but it's hard to tell whether they were tourists or part of the fighters. Back to you."

(Earlier announcer): "We have more information on that transmission. Apparently Dulinor was accompanied by his own honor guard, which assisted him in this by shooting down the emperor's own troops at the time. It also seems that the Aslan ambassador was killed by Dulinor, but we don't yet know why. We have here in our studio Victoria Apo, an expert on Imperial history and law. Victoria, what can you tell us about this 'right of assassination'?"

(Victoria Apo): "The right of assassination claimed by Dulinor on the transmission has not been used since before the time of Arbellatra, Strephon's ancestor. The first emperor to be assassinated by his successor was Cleon II, also known as Cleon the Mad. Porfiria shot him in the council chambers in 245, and was proclaimed Empress by the Moot that same year. Since that time, 11 different emperors or empresses have been assassinated, but none have been killed in office since the early 600s."

(Announcer): "How does this right of assassination work?"

(Apo): "It's not that anyone can kill the emperor and then claim the throne. The assassin must be a high noble, and must kill the emperor by his own hand in the presence of witnesses. Finally, the Moot must approve of the new emperor, just as it does with any successor."

(Announcer): "So Dulinor's claims may not be valid?"

(Apo): "That's for the Moot to decide."

(Announcer): "Thank you. As this story continues to unfold, we'll be bringing you live coverage and commentary..."

News broadcasts continue through the night. By the next morning, the situation is clarified, and the Palace Information Office issues an official statement with a brief holographic recording of the throne room before the shooting started, stating only that the Emperor and his family were killed by gunfire the previous afternoon, and that authorities were investigating. Citizens are still advised to avoid the area of the palace, where fighting and rioting continued, with occasional plasma flashes reported along the Grand Promenade. Capital is under martial law, and off-planet transportation has been temporarily suspended.

SPRUNG FROM THE CAGE

If, during the aftermath of the assassination, the crew members want to go to the palace and investigate, you must prevent them from succeeding. Depending upon the attitudes of your players (and also the attitudes of their Aslan characters), you may be able to do this with a simple statement that it probably wouldn't be a good idea. If the players insist, then use whatever military means you desire to prevent them from becoming involved until the next day.

The Aslan crew must now recover their companions, in the face of a growing anti-Aslan sentiment and some rioting in the city. The Aslan trade delegation is questioned and released, flown from the Imperial Palace to a nearby starport.

The shuttle pilot, however, is being held on the eighth floor of the Cleon jail, about 6 km from the Imperial Park. Authorities are unwilling to let him go until his trial has been held. News reports continue to question the involvement of Aslan elements in Strephon's assassination, because the Aslan Regiment was definitely involved in ground fighting, and Strephon was killed in the presence of the Yerlyaruiwo ambassador. Drop whatever hints are necessary to get your players involved: they should see the shuttle pilot's life as being in mortal danger as long as he is on Capital. (In fact, Aslan were not involved in this plot, but the local citizenry are riled up and apt to take out their vengeance on the nearest available target.)

The characters have two basic options, once they learn that any conventional route to their friend's release involves delay and accompanying danger for him. (Imperial authorities will be of no help in this matter, which is purely a local affair.) Simply put, the characters can bribe their friend out or fight him out. If the characters choose to attempt a bribe, you can use the bribery sequence in **MegaTraveller**, or use this UTP:

To bribe the authorities in Cleon to release the Aslan prisoner:

DIFFICULT, bribery, edu (hazardous, uncertain)

REFEREE: A minimum offer of Cr250 is necessary for this task to succeed; for each additional Cr50 offered, apply a DM of 1 to the roll. Thus an offer of Cr350 gives a DM of 2, an offer of Cr400 gives a DM of 3, and so on. Apply this DM secretly; the players do not need to know this information.

If the result is TOTAL TRUTH, the attempt succeeds and the shuttle pilot is released. If the result is SOME TRUTH, the attempt fails; another attempt is possible. If the result is NO TRUTH, the attempt fails, and the offering character is arrested.

If the characters decide to fight their way in to rescue their friend, then arrange a suitable counterforce for them. The jail is reasonably protected, but then neither do they expect a full force assault to rescue a prisoner.

Once the characters are together, they need to return to their ship and get out of the system despite the embargo on outgoing vessels. They have really only one chance: race the ship out to 10 diameters and risk a misjump. The ship will be chased by Imperial Naval vessels; evading them requires succeeding at the following UTP.

To evade Imperial vessels in the Capital system after Strephon's death:

DIFFICULT, pilot, int (fateful, non-repeatable)

REFEREE: Any failure at this task causes the vessel to be

fired upon and engaged in combat. Succeeding allows the vessel to reach a 10-diameter distance safely.

CONCLUSION

The Aslan trade delegation can brief the characters on the events in the throne room. Dulinor shot the three members of the royal family and the Aslan ambassador, while his own honor guard attacked the emperor's bodyguard. Dulinor then sat on the throne and proclaimed himself as emperor, then scattered something on the floor and fled the room with his troops.

In the ensuing confusion, one of the members of the trade delegation managed to pick up one of these things and slip it into her pocket. The item turns out to be a holocrystal record. When played back, it details Dulinor's claims to the throne by right of assassination. This holocrystal is a valuable historical artifact, and its possession could become the focus of another adventure without too much work on the part of the referee. Duke Varian, Strephon's nephew, will declare possession of one of those holocrystals grounds for the death penalty in a short time, when he makes his attempt to gain the throne.

Whether the characters succeed or fail in their actions in this adventure, it should give them something to think about. If your players never get past the assassination, but instead spend the rest of the play session debating its ramifications for the future, consider the session a success.

NPCs FOR THE SCENARIO

As a matter of historical interest, the UPPs for the principals involved in the assassination are listed here. Other NPCs should be generated by the referee as needed.

EMPEROR STREPHON

At the time of his assassination in 1116:
Emperor Strephon 667ABF Age 66
Admin-6, Leader-5, Persuasion-2, Linguistics-2, History-1, Artisan-1,
Small Watercraft-1

Homeworld=A, Medium, Dense, Wet, Hi Pop, Hi Law, Hi Stellar (Capital)

DULINOR, ARCHDUKE OF ILELISH

At the time of Strephon's assassination in 1116:
Archduke 887CBF Age 50
Admin-4, Leader-4, Handgun-4, Bribery-1, Carousing-1, Jack–O–T-1
Homeworld=A, Large, Exotic, Dry, Hi Pop, Ext Law, Hi Stellar (Dlan)

More details on Dulinor's personality and background can be found in the other adventure in this issue.

THE ASSASSINATION

Under the **MegaTraveller** rules, combat becomes a series of tasks, resolved by standard UTP rolls. Dulinor had an excellent opportunity to make good his strike against the Imperial family.

To hit a target at short range (1-5 m) with a handgun:
ROUTINE, handgun, dex, instant

Dulinor has a DM of +4 for his skill, and a +1 for his dex, giving him a +5 on the to hit roll. He would have missed only on a fumble roll of 2. In fact, Dulinor needed only three shots from his magnum-type revolver: one for the emperor, one for his wife, and one for his daughter.

Further details on Strephon's assassination and the resulting upheaval in the Third Imperium can be found in the forthcoming *Challenge 29* and *30*, to be published by Game Designers' Workshop.

THE WORLD OF DLAN (A8D1ADE-G)

Dulinor's home world of Dlan is a religious dictatorship. Dlan's religion is known as Virasa, from the Vilani word for "discovery". The religion holds that a knowledge of God is impossible during one's normal life, and discussions of whether God exists or what his attributes might be are strictly prohibited. Despite this professed ignorance of God, the Virasins do have extensive beliefs in an afterlife, and its comforts and mode of existence are regular topics of discussions in the quarterly khanu (foreshadowing) meetings.

"A person 'as mad as a Dlani' is avoided by all, in the popular speech of those in Ilelish Sector."

Believers are taught that they will receive complete knowledge of all things in this paradisical existence, giving the religion its name of "discovery". Non-humans will not receive this special blessing, and on Dlan alien races must wear black clothing as a symbol of this unfortunate status. Human non-believers number about 20% of Dlan's population, and they must also wear all-black clothing.

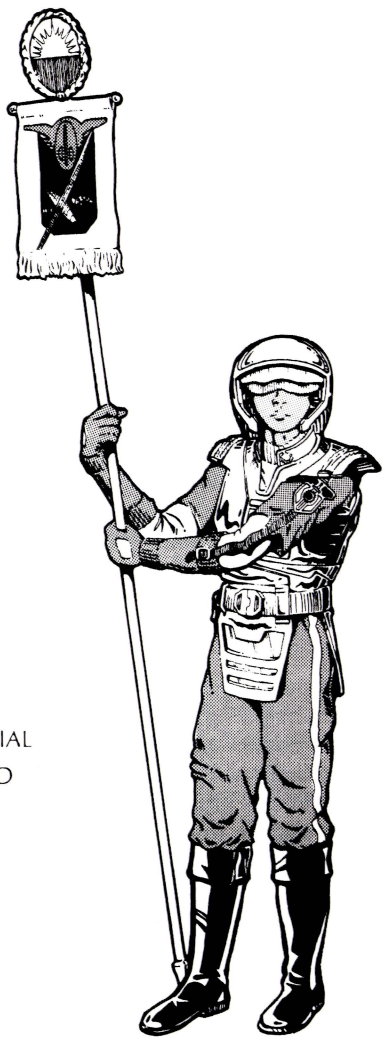
The Dlani government rules believers and non-believers by different laws, but the differences apply principally to allowed occupations and taxes. Virasa teaches that those who die a violent death will not achieve the full state of knowledge in the afterlife, and so Dlan's extensive military forces and police services are staffed almost entirely by non-believers. Seeing a brigade of grav soldiers approaching in jet black uniforms is an ominous sight.

Dulinor himself and his family members dress entirely in black, belonging to the non-believing population of the world.

As a general rule, non-believers tend not to travel as much as believers, since Virasa requires a natural death on Dlan for the complete knowledge in the afterlife. Because of this, most traders and representatives from Dlan tend to be non-believers, who dress entirely in black and have a more militant attitude even than the rest of the world's inhabitants. A person "as mad as a Dlani" is avoided by all, in the popular speech of those in Ilelish Sector.¤

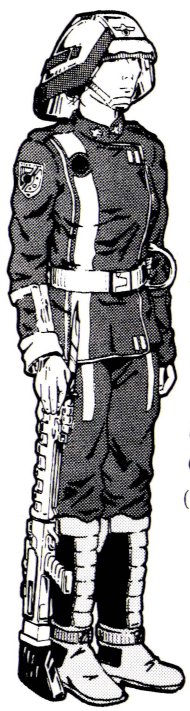
Imperial Guard Uniforms

HOUSEHOLD CALVALRY



IMPERIAL GUARD

ASLAN GUARD



MARINE GUARD (w/o armor)

Crack Troops: The Imperial Guard

— by Terry McInnes

One of the attractions visitors to Capital enjoy most is the changing of the Guard at the Imperial Palace as battalions of troops in scarlet and gold parade to and from their guard posts.

This is the most visible duty of the Imperial Guard, the most elite troops of the Imperium. They are, however, far more than spit and polish ceremonial soldiers. During a crisis, they can almost instantly trade their scarlet and gold for combat camouflage and jump capsules to become one of the most combat effective units in known space. They are the emperor's household troops, a unit that has been in existence in one form or another ever since the Rule of Man.

Their primary mission is the protection of the Imperium and the protection of the emperor. To accomplish this mission, the Imperial Guard is organized into 11 regiments, including nine jump infantry regiments, the Imperial Artillery, and the Household Cavalry, a grav armored cavalry regiment.

The Guard regiments, in order of seniority, include:

The Sylean Guard
The Vland Guard
The Gateway Guard
The Ilelish Guard
The Antares Guard
The Imperial Artillery
The Household Cavalry
The Spinward Marches Guard
The Marine Guard
The Aslan Guard
The Solomani Guard

In addition to the Guards regiments, there are three additional units charged with the emperor's safety. These include the Marine Escort Force, the Scout Service Imperial Protection Detail, and the Naval Imperial Escort Squadron.

The Imperial Guard has four functions. First, it is a ceremonial unit designed to provide pomp, glamor, and the impression of power and tradition at the Imperial Court. This is accomplished through such ceremonies as the changing of the guard, the monthly regimental rotation parade, and the emperor's Birthday Review when His Majesty personally inspects each unit of the guard.

The Guard has a political function as well. Its regiments are made up of troops drawn from every major region of the Imperium and it serves as a symbol of Imperial unity. Most importantly, the Guard protects the life of the emperor and the continuity of the Imperial line.

The Guard is also the emperor's household troops and may be assigned missions to enforce Imperial policy as necessary. In war time, the Guard is a strategic reserve of elite troops that may be used to reinforce regular units or lead planetary invasions.

Throughout Imperial history, the high morale and military skill of the Imperial Guard has tipped the scales in many battles when one or more of its regiments attacked at a key moment. The Guard also has a major training function for the Imperial Armed Forces.

HISTORY OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD

The first unit that might be considered an ancestor of today's Imperial Guard was the Emperor Hiroshi's Marine Escort Force formed early during the Rule of Man. Similar units served throughout the Second Imperium, only to disappear, along with that empire, during the Long Night.

The first direct ancestor of today's guard was the Emperor Cleon I's Sylean Guard Regiment, formed as he was declared emperor when the Third Imperium was founded in the Year Zero. To this day, the Sylean Guard remains the senior regiment in the Imperial Guard and the Imperial Armed Forces.

Guard Regiments were added as the Imperium expanded and was organized into domains. Each Archduke of a domain contributed one regiment to the Guard as the domain was formed as a symbol of unity and loyalty to the Imperium. The Vland, Gateway, Ilelish, and Antares Guard regiments were added during this period. The Imperial Artillery and Household Cavalry were added in 250, converting the Guard from a ceremonial unit to a highly effective division used extensively in the Vargr Campaigns in the Corridor Sector until 348.

Many Aslan worlds had been incorporated in the Imperium by the time the Aslan Border Wars were settled in 350. As a gesture of peace and mutual respect, the Aslan Guard was raised from Aslan native to the Imperium and stationed at the Palace. To this day, the Hierate recognizes the Aslan Guard as a gesture of Imperial goodwill.

The Aslan Guard is famed for its defense of the Imperial Palace during Grand Admiral Olav hault Plankwell's assault in 606 which precipitated the Civil Wars. Unlike other Guard regiments, it did not surrender and was virtually destroyed defending the palace approaches. This gave the Marines of Empress Jaqueline's Escort Force time to set up their last ditch defense. To this day, the Aslan Guard has the reputation of being -- along with the Marines -- the toughest and most loyal regiment in the Guard.

Jacqueline's Escort Force died heroically to a man in their futile attempt to prevent her assassination by Plankwell. Although the Imperial Guard was ultimately defeated by Plankwell's forces, it so decimated his troops that he did not have enough loyal ground and ship's troops to retain control as emperor. The lack of enough Marines aboard his flagship lead directly to his death in a last minute boarding action at the Battle of Tricanus 5 in 609. In the end, the Guard had triumphed over Plankwell. However, Plankwell and the Barracks Emperors disbanded the Guard for the duration of the Civil War.

In honor of the Marines who died defending Empress Jacqueline, the Empress Arbellatra reestablished the Escort

"Throughout Imperial history, the high morale and military skill of the Imperial Guard has tipped the scales in many battles..."

Force in 629, and added the Marine Guard Regiment to the Imperial Guard when she reestablished the Imperial Guard that year. This addition, along with the formation of the Spinward Marches Guard in 550 as that sector became important, brought the Imperial Guard up to its present strength.

The Guard remained intact until 990 when the Solomani Guard was disbanded at the start of the Solomani Rim War because its loyalty was called into question. This regiment was reestablished in 1050 following the pacification of Terra in 1002 It is now the junior regiment of the Guard.

The Guard remained free of politics until 989 when senior Guard commanders under General Nicolai Dienne forced the abdication of Emperor Styryx in favor of Emperor Gavin, his eldest son. This palace coup was supported by the Imperial General Staff and by most of the Imperial Armed Forces because of Styryx' bungling in the conduct and settlement of the Third Frontier War. The coup was not bloodless. Styryx' IISS body guard remained loyal to him and were killed during a brief firefight with the Aslan Guard. Styryx was found cowering in his personal fresher and was forced to sign his abdication at the point of General Dienne's gauss pistol.

GUARD LIFE

Members of the Guard lead a life of spit and polish, drill and training. Each member is a seasoned veteran.

Guard members are nominated for duty by their regimental commanders in the regular Army or Marines, either for heroic action in combat, their military bearing, strength, endurance, or appearance. (In **Traveller** terms, Guards get favorable enlistment DMs for strength and endurance ratings of 10+.) They are posted to their domain or other appropriate Guard regiment as vacancies occur.

Guard members serve one four-year term. At the end of the term they may either be reposted to a regular regiment or, if promoted during the term, remain with the Guards.

During their four year term, members receive the equivalent of a four year military education. Along with the Imperial Military academies and Officer Candidate Schools, service in the Guard is one of the primary sources of officers for His Majesty's Army and Marines. Service in the Guard also results in an automatic +2 in social standing because of the prestige associated with this elite unit, and the social contacts it is possible to gain in service at Capital.

The Imperial Guard maintains an "up or out" policy. Any Guard member who is not promoted during a term will be automatically reassigned to a regular regiment at the end of that term at one rank higher than his or her Guard rank. Ostensibly, this is designed to give a greater opportunity for Guard service. In reality, this policy is designed to prevent political cliques from forming among Guard members.

There are two exceptions to this policy: both the Aslan Guard and the Marine Escort Force are regarded as the emperor's personal troops because of their tradition of loyalty to the crown. Members are permanently assigned to these units and may remain as long as they pass strict strength, dexterity, and endurance tests.

GUARD DISPOSITIONS

The Aslan Guard, The Marine Guard, the Imperial Artillery, and the Household Cavalry are always on duty at the Imperial Palace unless otherwise ordered by the emperor.

The remaining seven regiments each serve one month tours of Guard duty at the Palace on rotation, with one regiment of the seven on duty at the Palace at all times. There is, therefore, the equivalent of one reinforced jump division on duty in or around the Palace at all times.

"Members of the Guard lead a life of spit and polish, drill and training. Each member is a seasoned veteran."

The six regiments not on duty at the Palace are stationed at various barracks around Capital and are charged with maintaining security and order on the planet as needed. Since disturbances are virtually unknown at the center of the Imperium, the "off duty" regiments are generally in training either on Capital or on worlds in nearby systems. All Guards are battle dress and jump qualified.

The Marine Escort Force always has one company on duty in the inner Palace whenever the emperor is in residence. The Escort Force always accompanies him on his travels whenever he leaves the Palace for locations off Capital.

As noted in the section on Guard history, the Guards regiments are always available for combat duty in time of war. During the recently ended Fifth Frontier War, six Guard jump troop regiments, the Household Cavalry, and the Imperial Artillery were organized as the Guards Corps and dispatched to assist in the defense of Rhylanor in 1109. However, the Zhodani thrust aimed at Rhylanor, deep in the Marches, was thrown back by the Corridor Fleet before the Guards Corps arrived in the system. The Scout Service Imperial Protection Detail has 12-person detachments on continuous protective duty within sight of the emperor at all times except when he is in private chambers.The detail's chief job is to prevent assassination using their bodies if necessary. Each member wears cloth armor under plain civilian clothing and carries a concealed gauss pistol and short range communicator. Short barreled automatic gauss carbines (gauss rifle-1 on the range table) are often carried concealed within attache cases as well. Small hand-launched anti-tank/anti-aircraft missiles are also available to the protective detail.

The Imperial Yacht "Pax Imperica" and its attendant Imperial Naval Escort Squadron is the remaining element of the emperor's security system. The "Pax Imperica" is a 10,000-ton jump-4 vessel capable of transporting the emperor, his family and personal staff in luxurious accommodations, as well as the Marine Escort Force as ship's troops.

The Imperial Yacht is usually accompanied by the Naval Escort Squadron which consists of three Sylean-class 100,000-ton battleships, a fleet carrier for long-range fighter protection, a division of Sloan-class fleet escorts to cover any withdrawal, and a division of jump-6 fleet couriers for communication.¤

REGIMENTAL ORGANIZATION

Each guards regiment is the equivalent of a reinforced Imperial Army jump troops regiment. It consists of a headquarters and service company, a grav tank battalion, an artillery battery, and three jump troop battalions. Each unit is equipped with the highest quality equipment available in the Imperium.

The headquarters includes a command platoon, a medical platoon equipped as a mobile hospital, and a maintenance and support platoon.

The regimental grav tank battalion is charged with providing both added firepower support to the jump battalions and reinforcement to each battalion's grav tank companies to exploit breakthroughs. It includes a headquarters section of one command and two battle tanks, and three grav tank companies. Each company is made up of three tank platoons. Unlike standard Imperial Army units which contain three tanks in each platoon, a Guards' grav tank platoon includes five 20-ton Tech 15 AFVs armed with fusion Z-guns.

The artillery battery is available to provide concentrated firepower for the regiment, augmenting the artillery firepower available in each battalion. It includes two multiple rocket launcher sections and a remote-controlled drone missile launcher section. Each section is mounted on four vehicles, adapted from grav armored personnel carrier chassis.

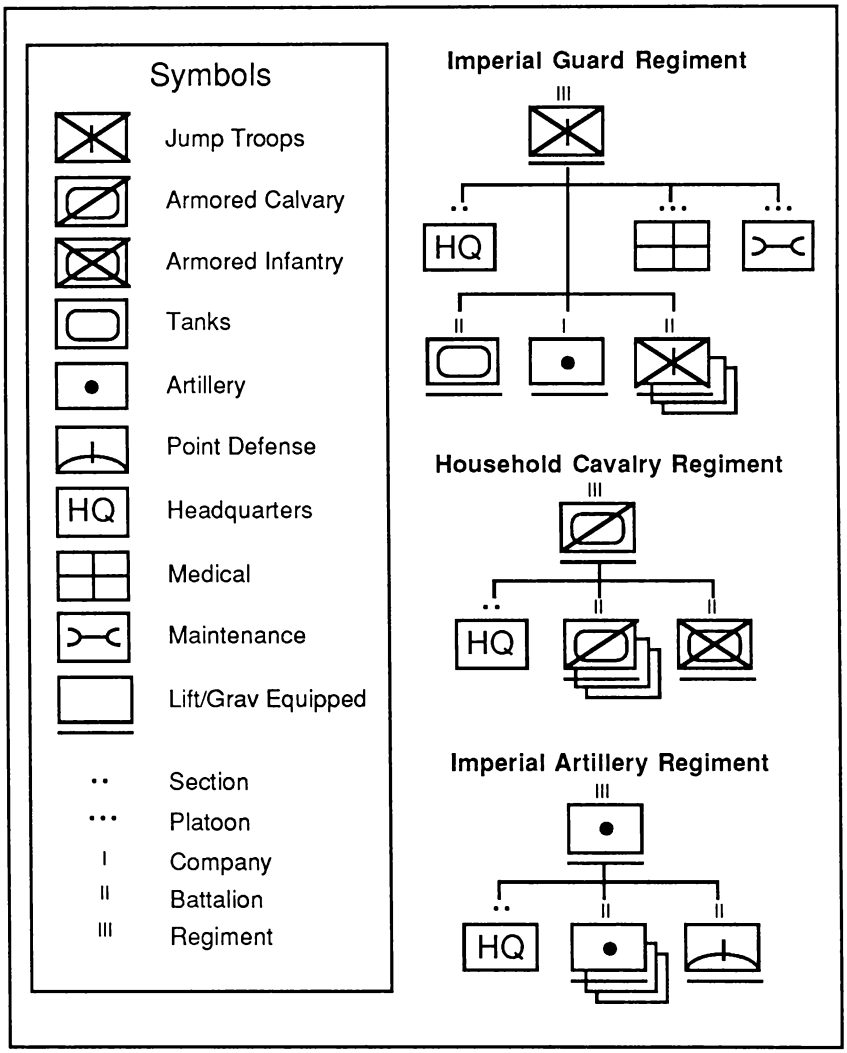
Each jump troop battalion consists of three jump troop companies, a grav tank company, an artillery platoon, and a support platoon. The jump troop companies include three platoons made up of three 10-soldier squads and a four-person headquarters element. All are trained to assault a planetary surface from orbit using high-survivability jump capsules. Each soldier is equipped with battle dress and an FGMP-15. Each set of battle dress includes an integral grav belt for personal transportation and extended maneuverability.

The artillery platoon is essentially identical to the four-vehicle multiple rocket launcher section of the regimental artillery battery.

The support platoon is the battalion's supply and maintenance unit. One of its major functions is the procurement, storage and maintenance of the battalion's jump capsules.

While on guard duty at the palace, however, Guard troopers wear scarlet uniforms (maroon for the Marine Guards) and gold ceremonial torso armor and helmets (equivalent to battle dress-3). They carry gauss rifles with fixed bayonets while on guard duty. The Marine Guards also wear cutlasses on their belts.

The Imperial Artillery consists of a headquarters section, three artillery battalions and a point defense battalion. Each artillery battalion includes three meson gun batteries each equipped with four meson gun grav sleds and a headquarters and fire direction battery. The point defense battalion crews the permanent anti-spacecraft fusion gun and missile installations located around the Imperial Palace.



The Household Cavalry is perhaps one of the most colorful units in the Imperial Guard. For ceremonial occasions, squadrons of this unit are mounted on both horses from Terra and kian from the Spinward Marches.

The Household Cavalry is in reality an armored cavalry regiment equipped with a headquarters section, three armored battalions, and a lift infantry battalion. Because of its fearsome combat reputation, the Household Cavalry is also known as the "Emperor's Hammer".

Each armored battalion consists of four companies. Alpha, Beta, and Gamma Companies each include three tank platoons of five grav tanks each plus a three tank headquarters platoon. The Household Cavalry tanks are identical to those found in the infantry tank companies. Delta Company of each battalion is a fire support group equipped with three platoons of three fire support APCs. These vehicles are equipped with racks of "fire and forget" missiles and one VRF gauss gun each.

The lift infantry battalion includes three companies of three platoons each plus a grav tank company and an artillery battery. The lift infantry platoons include three squads of 10 soldiers each riding aboard a grav armored personnel carrier crewed by a driver and the squad leader, plus a command APC for the platoon leader. The grav tank company is identical to those attached to a Guard jump troop regiment.

The Marine Escort Force consists of four companies armed with gauss rifles, side arms, and riot control weapons and may be identified by their iridium body armor (rated at Battle Dress-2). The battalion is trained in crowd control and military police tactics as well as in infantry combat techniques. When travelling with the Emperor, each squad travels aboard its own grav APC armed with a VRF gauss gun.¤

The Imperial Palace

—by Rob Caswell and Bill Connors

Situated in the city of Cleon on Capital, the Grand Palace of the Third Imperium is the third generation of such structures built to house the ruling families. The first of these, the Grand Palace of Cleon, was begun in -7 and completed in -5 under the direction of Cleon I , the founder of the Third Imperium.

Like many similar structures of the time it served not only as a home for the Imperial Family, but also as a military fortress. Like a young mountain range, the palace was a collection of slopes and angled surfaces jutting sharply into the sky. The complex had few entrances , all of which were very low to the ground and, like much of the building, covered with upward-pointing spikes. This shocking architecture served the very basic purpose of making it difficult for attacking grav-troopers to obtain entrance or even to find a safe perch.

The Grand Palace of Cleon I still stands today in the Imperial Park and is a much visited monument. Adjacent to it is a museum which contains relics and displays of the Sylean Federation, which preceeded the Third Imperium, and of Cleon's life.

Martin II, a man of diverse cultural interests and a remarkable love for art, architecture, and the sciences, came to the throne in 195, in an era of calm and relatively peaceful expansion prior to the advent of the Vargr Campaigns in 210. The second of the palaces was the fruit of his passions. Construction began in 195 and ended in 200, with much of the design work being done by Martin II himself. Looking like a castle from Solomani fairy tales, the palace was a conglomeration of brilliant white spires and glistening domes, surrounded by a ring of docking ports and observation decks, suspended 500 meters above the Imperial Park by a network of gravitic generators. The building was a marvel of the period, since no Imperial world had ever before attempted gravitic architecture of that magnitude. It is ironic that Martin II, occupying much of his reign with touring the Imperium to obtain a better understanding of the cultures and races it embraced, spent so little time in the palace which was the realization of one of his greatest dreams. The Grand Palace of Martin II survived for over 400 years, though some of its original beauty was tarnished by age, by the modifications of less artistic rulers, and by the unscrupulous actions of later occupants. Cleon III, for example, also known as Cleon the Mad, regularly disposed of suspected traitors (convicted or not) by marching them off one of the many terraces at gunpoint.

The outbreak of the Civil War (609-622) saw the fortification of the structure as constant struggles for control of the Imperial throne raged in the core. The very grace and elegance which had been the mark of the palace now proved to be its downfall; even the best efforts at making it into a military facility left it unable to defend itself adequately. In 620, after a brief siege by the forces of Marava, the Grand Palace of Martin II was destroyed. In flames, with its gravitic support systems critically damaged, the palace listed hard to one side and slid into the park below. Only the brave efforts of the engineering crew prevented the structure from impacting amid Cleon's downtown buildings.

The collapse of this second palace formed a great crescent-shaped crater which has since become a lake in the Imperial Park. On the shores of this now serene body of water stands a commemorative monument and a museum which displays many artifacts from the second palace and the rulers who lived within it.

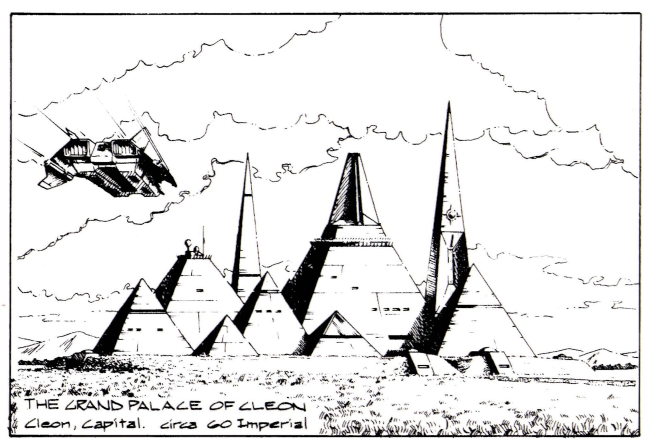
The third Grand Palace was begun in 629 and finished in 633 by Empress Arbellatra, whose reign marked the close of the Civil War and brought an end to the Emperors of the Flag. The political climate in the core today is certainly more stable than in the time of Arbellatra; still, the structure retains a portion of its military flavor, though in an unobtrusive way.

One of the primary goals in the construction of the Grand Palace of Arbellatra was to have the project, by its sheer magnitude, signal the various realms under Imperial rule that a new era of power and progress had begun. Thus the palace's awe-inspiring configuration: a sphere, one kilometer in diameter, hanging 500 meters above the landscape of the Imperial Park. (Holding station today around the main structure are a number of attendant complexes which are similar in shape, if not in size, to the Grand Palace itself. These are the Consortium Trinary, Paulo's Annex, and Tomutov's Palace.)

In the interests of security from the turbulent times surrounding its construction, the palace was built to withstand a siege of extended duration. It mounts a wide array of defenses, including a heavily armored outer hull, nuclear dampers, meson screens, and repulsor batteries. The entire Grand Palace is networked with psionic shielding fields, providing nearly absolute security from any form of telepathic espionage. Recent rumors that a black globe generator has been imported from the Spinward Marches and installed in the palace have been brushed aside by officials. A spokesman for the Imperial Guard attributed these reports to "a news media trying to fill its idle periods with wild speculations and flights of fancy born of an overactive imagination."

The palace has a limited offensive capability which is considered sufficient to hold off an attack while larger planetary defense systems can be brought to bear. Hidden from the public eye by cosmetic panels that can be jettisoned quickly in times of crisis, these systems include several meson guns (mounted well within the structure) and a number of accelerator bays, as well as missile and laser batteries scattered about the surface. It should be noted that, although the offensive systems are well maintained and the Imperial Guard troops who man them are regularly drilled, they have never been employed.

Unlike its companion structures, the palace is held aloft by a ring of ground based repulsor emplacements located directly below it in a complex deep underground. This facility serves as the central command post for all Imperial Naval activity, and is accessible only by anti-grav transportation tubes located at scattered points in the city of Cleon. The palace does have a limited internal gravitic support system for use in the rare event that the multiply-redundant ground based network fails. This capability is sufficient only for a "soft landing" of the structure.



THE HANGAR BAYS

Nearly all travel to and from the palace is routed through the huge hangar complex at the base of the lower hemisphere. As one approaches or departs, the huge structure hangs intimidatingly overhead, blotting out most of the sky and seeming to envelope the traveller. The impression is not easily forgotten, and countless artists have tried to capture the experience in a variety of media ranging from poetry to neurosculpture.

It should be noted that the airspace for 100 kilometers around the palace is restricted, and that any violation of this zone results in immediate radio challenges and the prompt dispatch of interceptor craft. If an object is deemed hostile (any unidentified object at 50 km is automatically deemed to be hostile), it will be fired upon by the Imperial Guard without further hesitation.

Once a vehicle is cleared for approach, it is taken under control by the Aircraft Operations Center (AOC). This facility is located in a large blister suspended in the center of the hangar bay area and governs all traffic to, from, and around the Grand Palace. When the AOC is in control of the aircraft, it is guided into one of the bays via the immense hangar doors about the deck's perimeter. These entrances house a wide variety of sensor systems which examine the vehicle in great detail as it passes through, ensuring that all is as it should be.

Once cleared, the craft is grounded in an appropriate landing zone and passengers may use the slidewalks which lead from the various bays to the core shaft. Needless to say, all personal weaponry is restricted except for those arms carried by authorized personnel.

THE CORE SHAFT

Running from the lowest level of the palace to the Grand Promenade deck at the structure's equator are a number of gravitic lifts. These provide quick and easy access to any of the 150 decks housed in the lower hemisphere of the Grand Palace. The lifts come in two sizes: small discs about 3 meters in diameter for personal transport, and larger ones fully 10 meters in diameter for cargo, supplies, and large parties (such as a visiting K'Kree family).

The lifts are arranged about a tube-shaped aquarium which is 100 meters in diameter and over 400 meters deep. At its lowest point, the water pressure in the aquarium is about 44kg/cm^2 or 41 standard atmospheres. Its surface is located in the middle of the Royal Garden at the center of the Grand Promenade deck. The water in the tank is refrigerated to colder and colder temperatures as it nears the bottom, simulating the climates found at various depths in a standard liquid water ocean.

The ice-cold water from the bottom of the tank is pumped though filters and then into the coolant system for the palace's reactor to be reheated before it is released far above the surface of the aquarium to form the Four Grand Cascades.

A tremendous menagerie of aquatic life forms from all corners of the Imperium have been gathered here, and as a traveller rides one of the lifts in the core shaft one is able to view an exotic panorama of creatures as the lift rises or descends past regions of gradually changing pressures and temperatures.

THE ROYAL GARDEN

Located at the center of the palace on the Grand Promenade deck, this room is the setting of some of the most extravagant internal decor in Imperial space. In the corridor surrounding the garden are numerous escalators which lead up from the chamber at the top of the core shaft on the level below.

While standing among the various plants that make up the garden, one can look overhead to see, suspended some 500 meters overhead, the lens of a huge skylight. Almost a quarter of a kilometer in diameter and held in place with a web of gravitic support fields, the skylight allows natural sunlight to pour into the enormous cylindrical atrium above the Royal Garden. Because of the gradual outward taper of the atrium walls, the impression which one receives when looking up from below is that the walls extend perfectly straight into eternity and have no common vanishing points.

A ledge around the atrium walls 200 meters above the promenade deck serves as the base for the Hanging Gardens of Styryx. An astounding variety of flowering vines and plants drape downward from here to cover nearly every centimeter of the walls below. This collection was begun in 950 by Emperor Styryx, who was known for his great love of botany.

Some 75 meters above the promenade deck, the Four Grand Cascades burst forth from amid the Hanging Gardens and fall to the floor below, creating a constant sound of falling water and filling the air with a fine mist. Each of the Grand Cascades was named for one of the four primary palace architects: Kimishaggh, Sendushad, Nellson, and Luragarmashii. Each one of the cascades forms a pool at its base, and then flows via slightly meandering streams to feed into Mimir, the lake which makes up the surface of the aquarium.

Towering almost 300 meters above the garden is Yggdrasil, one of the tallest trees known to Imperial science. Imported from Ranther, Yggdrasil was presented in honor of the Third Imperium's Grand Millenium Festival over a century ago.

Because of the tree's great mass, and because it had to be placed off-center in the room (as Mimir filled the middle of the Royal Garden), additional gravitic support is used to balance it. The translucent leaves of the gargantuan tree filter the sunlight which falls upon them from the skylight and breaks it up into its spectral components. This display is most impressive at midday, when the entire chamber is showered in a dazzling display of rainbow hues.

ARBELLATRA'S GIFT

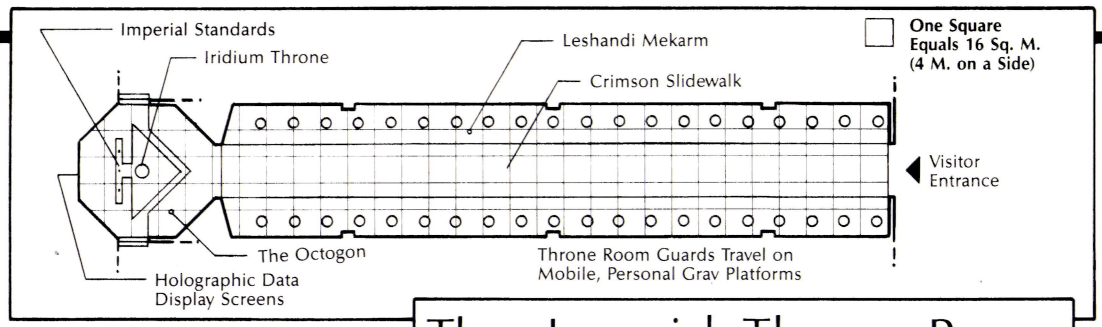
Of great interest to Imperial historians is Arbellatra's Gift. This five meter sphere of platinum, a time capsule whose contents are wholly unknown, sits atop a glistening pillar of iridium at the base of Yggdrasil. Built at the same time as the palace, the capsule was sealed during a grand festival marking the building's completion by Arbellatra in 633; it was set to open at an unknown date in the future.

Although nearly everyone expected that the Gift would open during the Third Imperium's thousandth year, it did not. Following this disappointment, a number of alternate dates have been suggested, many of which have already passed, and still the sphere remains sealed.

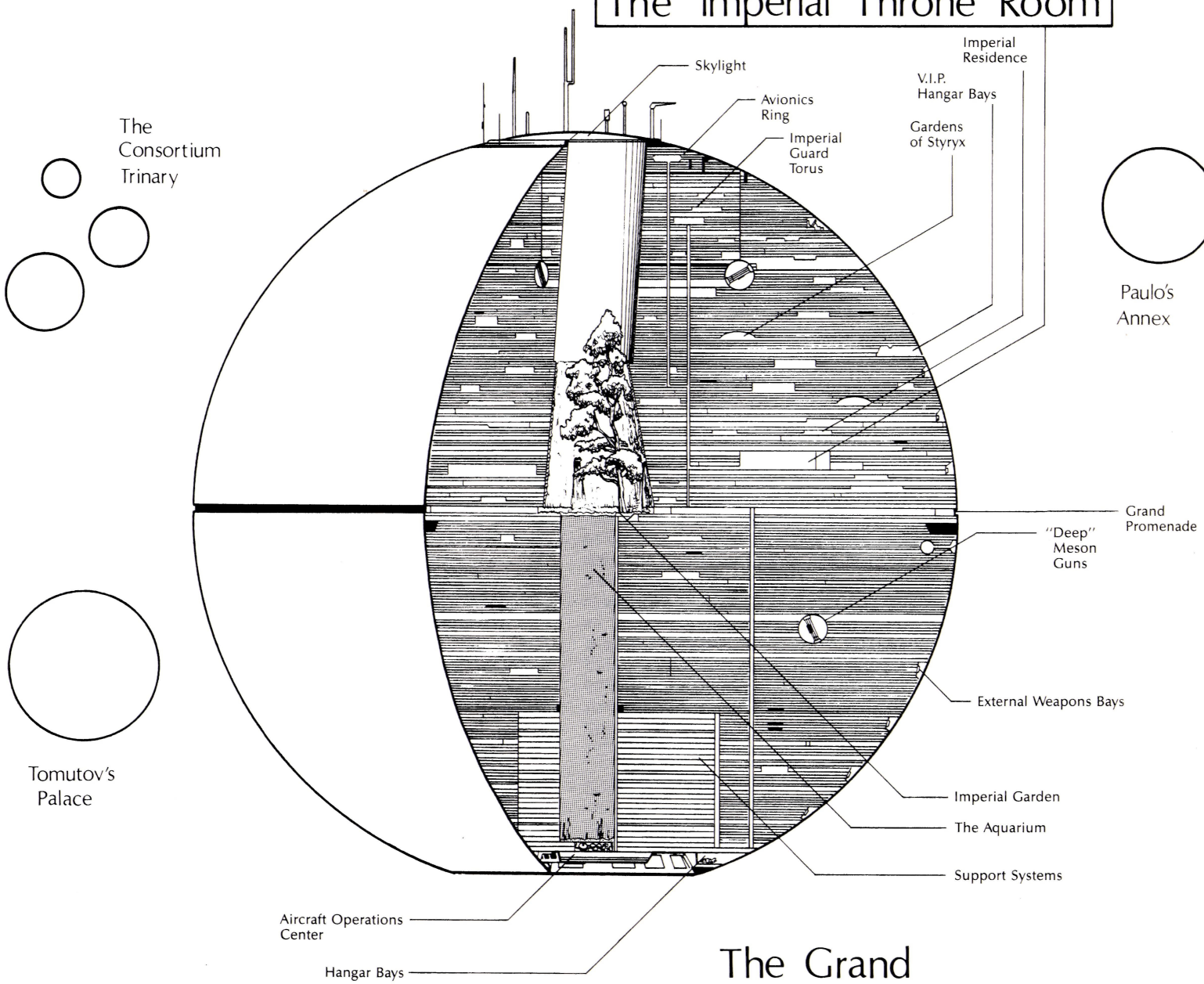
(*Referee:* The timer on the capsule is broken, having failed some time in the late 800s due to the vibrations caused by the Cascades and the humid air in the chamber. It was, in fact, intended to open on the first day of the Imperium's thousandth year, but failed to do so. As no one would dream of breaking into the artifact before it was meant to be opened, it may well remain sealed forever. Inside are a number of relics from the period of Arbellatra's reign, including a holographic message of greetings to whoever sits on the throne when the capsule opens. Its contents are of little value to anyone except historians.)

THE GARDENS OF TOMOLIN

Scattered about the palace's upper hemisphere and throughout the Royal residences are a number of lesser gardens which were commissioned by Emperor Styryx and installed prior to the creation of the great Hanging Gardens. The Gardens of Tomolin were so named by Styryx to honor his mother, who had instilled in him a deep fascination with the



The Imperial Throne Room



The Grand Palace of Arbellatra

Constructed 629-633

Imperial Guard Parade Grounds (Naval Central Command Complex Resides Below

To The Alkhalikoi

THE IMPERIAL PALACE GROUNDS ON CAPITAL

SCALE: 1 INCH EQUALS 1 KM.

The Imperial Park is located at the center of the city of Cleon and is surrounded by large stretches of low-lying buildings which comprise the Cleon metropolitan area.

The Imperial Park

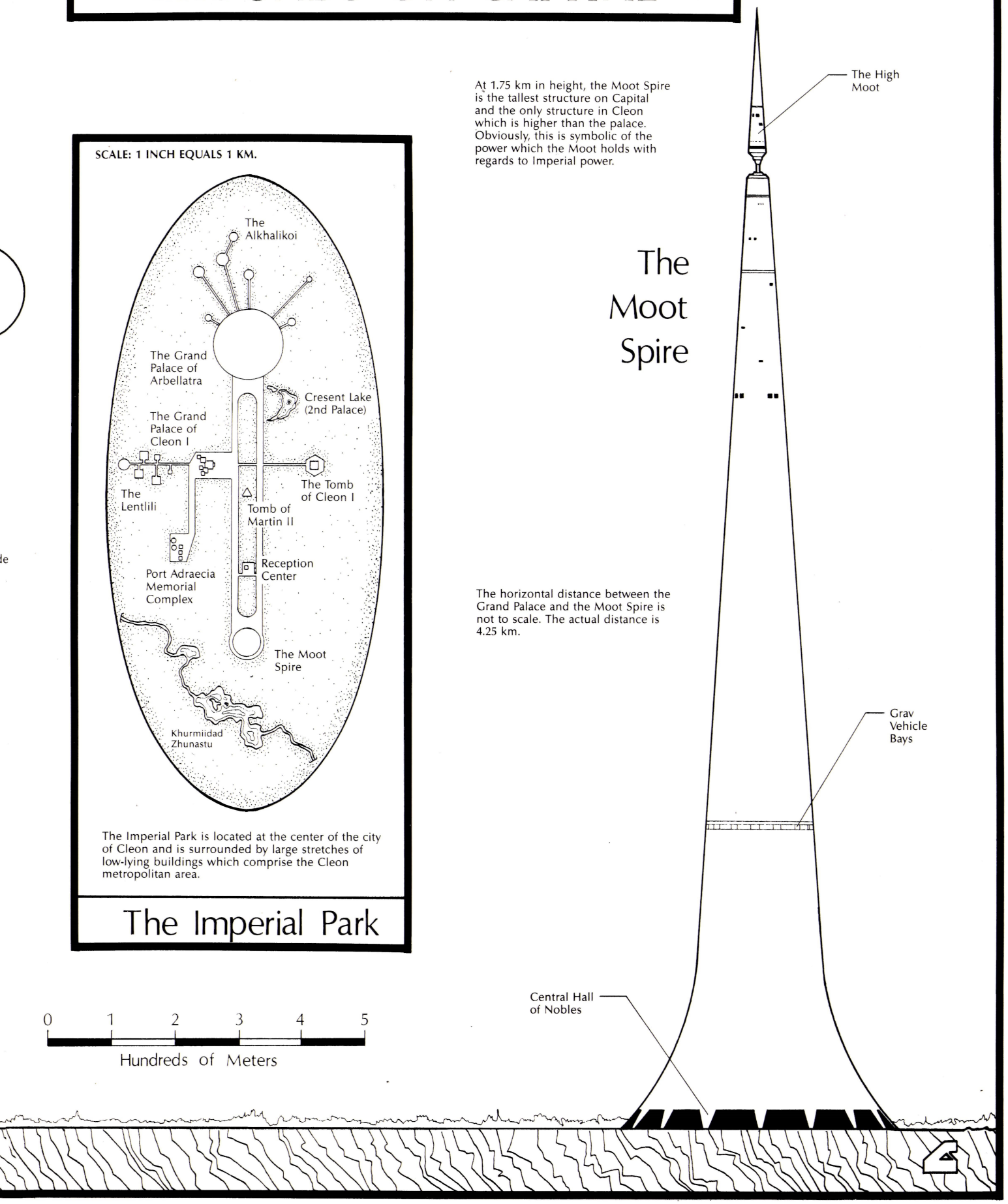
0 1 2 3 4 5

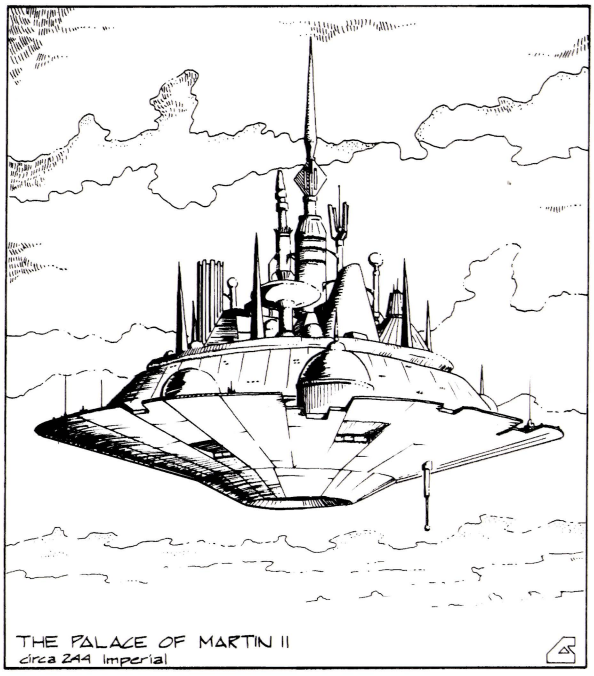
Hundreds of Meters

At 1.75 km in height, the Moot Spire is the tallest structure on Capital and the only structure in Cleon which is higher than the palace. Obviously, this is symbolic of the power which the Moot holds with regards to Imperial power.

The Moot Spire

The horizontal distance between the Grand Palace and the Moot Spire is not to scale. The actual distance is 4.25 km.





great diversity of flora throughout the Imperium. The first of these gardens was completed in 951, the last in 955. Over the years, these have become a favorite retreat area for emperors seeking solitude. Each of these 57 minor gardens mimics the environment of a single world somewhere in the Imperium. Planets were selected by Styryx for natural beauty and uniqueness so as to display a great diversity and exhibit a multitude of climates.

The lighting, atmosphere, temperature, day/night cycle, and other factors (including such fine touches as the constellations in the night skies) all duplicate in perfect detail the environment from which the garden was transplanted. These areas are much smaller than the Royal Garden, averaging only about 50 meters in diameter and being hemispherical in shape, with ceilings 10 meters high. Often, if appropriate to their simulated environments, gardens have magnificent fountains located at their centers.

A specialist is charged with the care of each simulated environment and these positions have become much sought after in the botanical community.

THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

As one would expect, the portions of the Grand Palace which serve as living areas for the reigning emperor and his family are lavishly decorated and provide a degree of comfort which is perhaps unequaled within the borders of the Third Imperium. While Strephon and Iolanthe have only one daughter, other emperors and empresses in the past have had quite large families, and the variety of living quarters provided for the Imperial Family takes up several decks.

All the rooms are outfitted with the latest technological comforts and conveniences, but at the same time these are designed in such a way that the human touch is not lost. The existence of the Imperium, after all, rests in the *person* of the emperor, and he deals with his assistants and servants on a personal level.

THE GRAND LIBRARY

The Royal Family has at its disposal a great library, similar to the Argushiigi Admegulasha Bilanidin (AAB) on Vland. Although not as extensive as the AAB, it is comprehensive and holds information on nearly every subject which an emperor might be called upon to consider in the course of his daily duties. A major difference between the Grand Library and the AAB is that the former consists almost wholly of holographic recordings while the latter maintains an extensive collection of actual texts, documents, and artifacts which take up a great deal of space.

THE ESHUSHANDRA MARGARET

Also of note in the Royal Residence is this impressive collection of artistic efforts from the far corners of the Imperium and beyond. Originally known only as the Eshushandra, this portion of the palace came into its full glory during the reign of Empress Margaret I (666-763). Although intended at first only as a small art collection for the display of notable works, the hall was greatly expanded under the guidance of Margaret, who was particularly fond of both sculpture and holographic paintings.

By the time of her death, she had tripled the number of exhibits in the Eshushandra and greatly increased the amount of space dedicated to it. When Paulo I came to the throne after his sister's tragic death, he ordered the gallery renamed as a memorial to her. For a time, the hall stagnated after Margaret's demise, acquiring only a few minor works from collections around the Imperium. However, the Millenium Celebrations brought a swarm of gifts to Emperor Gavin, prompting him to dedicate the Millenium Annex, a wing of the Eshushandra, solely to these newly acquired treasures.

Included in Arbellatra's original collection and still in excellent condition today are a number of most impressive works by Martin II himself, including design work from the construction of the second Grand Palace. Another of Gavin's additions to this complex was a wing dedicated to art forms crafted by non-human races. Know as Gavin's Gallery, this portion of the Eshushandra contains unusual media such as olfactory paintings from the Hive Federation and Vegan sonic-sculptures. Notably absent from this display is any form of Zhodani psionic artwork.

THE ROYAL DOCKS

Adjacent to the residences is a private hangar area of considerable size, housing a variety of craft that serve the Imperial Family. While guided by the AOC when near the palace, just as any other craft, these vehicles have right of way at all times.

THE AVIONICS RING

Located on the ten highest levels of the upper hemisphere in a vast torus around the lens of the skylight, this extensive assembly of sensors contains nearly every form of active and passive detector system known to Imperial science as well as a massive assortment of communications gear for radio, laser, and meson transmissions. Often called simply "the ring", this facility maintains a constant watch over the entire Capital system. On the surface, it directly monitors activity from horizon to horizon and employs a number of orbital stations to survey what is beyond.

Information is constantly transmitted to the palace by craft (such as the system defense boats which patrol the region) and outposts on other planetary bodies. Except for the unavoidable delay in reception caused by the limitations of light speed transmissions, the ring has up to date information at all times. A composite report of the total sensor findings is sent directly to the Command Center in the Imperial Guard Torus.

THE IMPERIAL GUARD TORUS

Located beneath the avionics ring is the Imperial Guard's command torus. This facility is 25 decks high and contains all

of the command and administrative services for the Guard's 11 regiments. The uppermost levels of this complex are the four-deck high Strategic and Tactical Command (known as SAT-C). From here, the emperor and his highest ranking military commanders can oversee every facet of an Imperial Guard undertaking. It should be noted that, because of the time lag in communications with the frontier, SAT-C officers are often forced to leave the actual details of a mission to the individual regimental commanders.

Adjacent to the torus are five housing and training facilities for the Imperial Guard units currently on-duty at the palace. The Aslan Guard, Marine Guard, Imperial Artillery, and Household Cavalry have permanent support centers, as they are assigned to the Grand Palace at all times. The fifth section is used by whichever of the other seven units is currently protecting the emperor and the palace.

THE GRAND PROMENADE

Circling the equator of the Imperial Palace is the Grand Promenade. This 25 meter wide hallway runs along the entire circumference of the palace, making the corridor over 3 kilometers long. A wide slidewalk runs the entire length of the Promenade, moving at the pace of a casual walk. The outer wall is made up of large rectangular picture windows which look out over the vast city of Cleon below. The inner wall is decorated with holographic displays of land and cityscapes from various exotic worlds around the Imperium.

THE HALL OF WISDOM

One of the most intriguing features of the Grand Palace is the Raappuush kii Meshkur, or the Hall of Wisdom, a corridor 250 meters in length, 10 meters wide, and 12 meters high. Running along its length at 5 meter intervals are niches with holographic displays of the images of the past rulers of the Third Imperium. Opposite each niche is an engraving on the wall of the represented emperor's family crest. Although there are niches on both sides of the hall, these are alternated so that each image faces his family crest and not another niche.

The chamber is illuminated only by the faint glow of the niches, and has an almost crypt-like feel to it. Although there are no seats in the Hall of Wisdom, the walls are constructed with a bulge at the base which can serve as benches, allowing visitors to sit comfortably while admiring the past rulers of the Third Imperium.

The hall is more than just a display, however. Each of the holograms is run by its own computer, which is programmed with an advanced pseudo-reality simulator that enables it to imitate, with great accuracy, the personalities of the past rulers. Although the simulations are wholly incapable of creative thought, they amaze visitors not only with their life-like gestures and mannerisms but also with their comments on questions of the day. For example, an emperor could walk up to the figure of Jacqueline I, known for her brilliant economic policies and understanding of business interests, and seek advice on the handling of a current administrative problem in the Imperial Guard.

Obviously, the more recent rulers have more complete and more accurate simulations operating. Currently, there is no alcove which holds the image of Emperor Strephon, as standard policy is to activate an emperor's replica only upon his death.

THE LESHANDI MEKHARM

Entry into the Throne Room is made via the Leshandi Mekharm or Long Hall. This corridor is 100 meters long and 20 meters wide with a ceiling 25 meters overhead. A wide crimson colored slidewalk stretches from the twin doors of the hall to its end at the entrance to the Octagon, the actual throne room. Along both sides of the slidewalk are high crystal pillars imported from the Catseye system in the Solomani Rim. These crystals glow in a soft blue-white light that provides most of the illumination in the hall. High overhead, secured to the tops of the pillars, are banners suspended on platinum poles. The columns on the right side of the hall display the banners of the 20 sector dukes whose realms make up the Third Imperium. Across from each, on the opposite pillars, are flags which display the family crests of the dukes.

The vaulted ceiling overhead is engraved with a myriad of patterns and artwork. Dim illumination is provided to this area by lighting concealed in the soffits atop the crystal pillars, though the light from the glowing pillars is quite adequate for the lower regions of the Mekharm.

THE OCTAGON

The throne room of the Grand Palace is a large octagonal chamber roughly 20 meters across with a high, domed ceiling some 25 meters overhead. A single light is set into the center of the dome and it shines down to provide a bright illumination for the entire Octagon.

In the center of the room is a wide, triangular marble platform (the dais) upon which rests the Iridium Throne of Cleon I. Behind the glistening throne, on half-meter high platforms which extend from the central one, hang three standards. To the left, as one faces the throne, hangs the crest of the emperor's family. On the right hand side is the family crest of the emperor's spouse's line. Directly in back of the throne, and twice the size of the flanking banners, is the well known Imperial sunburst.

Three walls behind the throne and banners are actually part of a large holographic display screen. On this, any of a wide library of images can be presented in a manner which greatly resembles a large picture window. When the system is not otherwise programmed, it defaults to displaying an image of the cityscape of Cleon as it is seen from the Grand Promenade.

The two sides of the chamber which flank the Mekharm are large holographic display projectors. Because of the great size of the Third Imperium, it would be impractical for most nobles who might need the emperor's wisdom to travel to Capital and confer with him, so these holographic displays are used for pre-recorded messages and reports. By using the most advanced pseudo-reality simulators, nobles and other citizens of the Imperium can record all information relevant to their request for the emperor to consider.

To compose such a message, one records a statement detailing the issue and all data which seem important. A computer examines this and presents the subject with a list of "holes" that need to be filled in. Once this additional information is provided, the process is repeated. When the computer is satisfied with the completeness of the information, it is recorded on a holocrystal and sent to Capital. When the emperor views the plea, he is able to converse with the program in much the same way as one can speak with the images in the Hall of Wisdom. In almost all cases, the recorded message contains more than enough information for a decision to be reached.

THE IRIDIUM THRONE

In the center of the Octagon is the Dais, a platform of polished marble one meter high which holds the iridium throne. The throne is a slightly elongated hemisphere, almost teardrop shaped, with a wide base and a padded interior making it quite comfortable to sit in, even for long periods of time. The exterior is kept well polished, and the shaft of light which falls upon it from the dome overhead reflects brightly from its white metal surface.

Originally, this throne was commissioned by Cleon I and stood, atop sturdy but delicate looking webs of platinum-plated alloys, in the first palace. When Martin II built the second palace, the throne was relocated to the floating structure

amid much pomp and circumstance. After the second palace was destroyed the throne was pulled from the wreckage, its base damaged beyond repair, and brought to Arbellatra's palace. Here, it underwent modification and repair.

In the left arm, a small control panel rests in easy reach of the emperor's fingertips. With these controls, the throne can be rotated away from its normal view of the Leshandi Mekharm to face any portion of the Octagon. Additional circuits can tie the emperor instantly into the planetary communications network, control the holographic display systems of the Octagon, and provide full access to the palace computers.

THE COMPANION STRUCTURES

The Imperial Palace is surrounded by five different companion structures, floating nearby. These were built over a wide period of time for a variety of reasons. The Consortium Trinary consists of three separate spheres floating together, while Paulo's Annex and Tomutov's Palace are each individual spheres. The beauty and dignity of the Imperial Palace complex is greatly enhanced by the various configurations of these many spheres.

THE CONSORTIUM TRINARY

The Consortium Trinary was built in 729 by Margaret I to celebrate the hundredth birthday of the Imperial Palace. Its three spheres contain museums of the First, Second, and Third Imperiums, as well as research facilities for historians. While the museums are open to the public only a few days each year for special exhibits, scholars can spend time studying historical artifacts and documents year round.

PAULO'S ANNEX

Built in 740, Paulo's Annex has been described in many ways over the years. Perhaps the most suiting of these is "Pleasure Palace", as the structure offers seemingly endless varieties of entertainments, including large sporting arenas which can be converted into multiple configurations, allowing for competitions of almost any sort.

Over the years, it has served as a vacation spot for members of the Moot as well as the Royal Families and as the site for some of the greatest competitions in sporting history. Every ten years, athletes from around the Imperium gather on Capital to attend the Emperor's Games, which are held in the Annex.

TOMUTOV'S PALACE

The last of the companion structures to be built is Tomutov's Palace. Although he came eagerly to the throne in 767, Emperor Tomutov soon found himself confronted with a challenge that even he considered to be beyond him , the world of power politics. Try as he might, he could not adjust to the pressures of the crown, and he gave up the office in 768. Some historians consider the reign of Tomutov to be a period of weakness for the throne, while others contend that Tomutov was simply an honest person with very good intentions who was unable to "play the game" of politics.

Drawing on his own great fortune, Tomutov commissioned the construction of a private estate to be placed above the Imperial Park. Within the walls of the Tomutov's Palace were vast sporting arenas, recreation facilities, and galleries. It was a home which many believe to have been even more comfortable and elegant than those of the richest members of the Moot. Upon his death, Tomutov left the palace to the Empire to use as it saw fit.

Over the course of time, this building has come to serve as a home for the most important visitors to the Grand Palace. The structure has been sectioned off to provide private accommodations for up to 200 guests, all in the highest degree of comfort.¤

THE MOOT

by Gary L. Thomas

The Moot is the Imperial government's only deliberative body. It has few powers and even more rarely exercises them. In theory, the Moot includes all Imperial nobles of baronial or higher status, but most nobles do not find it convenient to travel to Capital, and so many of those seated hold proxy votes. Large blocks of these votes can be wielded by a single influential noble.

Technically, the Moot is supreme in the Imperium, but its power is extremely limited. In practice, its deliberations are advisory to the emperor, and he is wise to heed them. The Moot has only one power: to dissolve the Imperium. When this power is brought to bear, it compels compromise between opposing factions.

When an emperor dies, abdicates, or otherwise becomes unfit for office, the Moot becomes important as the validating body for the new emperor. It has the power to examine the qualifications and credentials of the heir apparent, and in unusual situations, to reject him.

The Moot holds its sessions in the Moot Spire, at 1.75 km high, the tallest building on Capital. By tradition, the Spire is the only building allowed to tower above the Imperial Palace, which is 4.25 km away. Elevators with gravitic compensators can speed visitors from the bottom to the top in 18 seconds. At the top of the Spire is the High Moot, where select committees hold the most private deliberations.

Neither the emperor nor any member of his family is allowed to enter the Moot Spire, except at the invitation of the Moot. As Strephon was approved and proclaimed emperor without his being interviewed by the Moot, he has never entered the Spire, and probably never will.

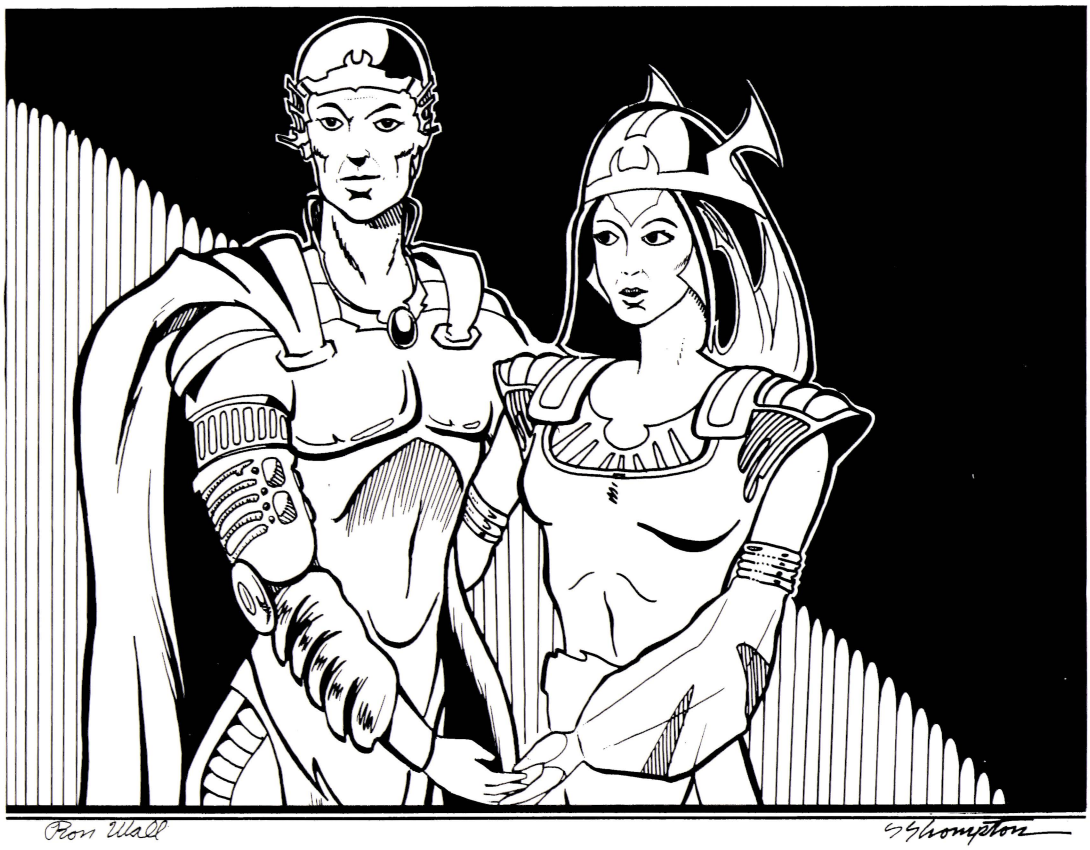
In the base of the Spire, occupying the first 35 meters of the structure, is the Great Hall of Nobles. This vast room is popular with tourists from all over the Imperium, who can come and see displays there of their own world's nobles. Several large holographic display maps of the Imperium allow visitors to reach out and "touch" a world, which then enlarges to show detailed maps. Three-dimensional historical and cultural programs can also be triggered by this device.

About a third of the way up are the Spire's air/raft bays. Traffic to the Spire is controlled by the AOC just as any other aircraft in the vicinity of the Imperial Palace. The Moot does have its own underground transportation network, however, separate from those facilities that serve the buildings beneath the palace.

Tours of the Moot Spire are given regularly, and visitors can watch public deliberations on a variety of subjects from a number of galleries. ¤

NOBLESSE OBLIGE: THE IMPERIAL NOBILITY

—by Bob Swarm



Nobles of the Third Imperium are often the most misplayed class in a **Traveller** campaign. Without guidelines to handle social standing values greater than 10 (A), arguments over what is a "reasonable" allowance or course of action for a noble are frequent.

Handling a noble as "just another one of the guys" or ignoring the noble standing can be just as bad. Some campaigns ignore social standing of all characters as a general rule, and thus miss some of the excitement and variety of the game.

The Third Imperium is *not* a democracy. As uncomfortable as this may make us feel, in **Traveller** social standing indicates not only the lifestyle and peer group for a citizen of the Imperium, but also the social "weight" a character can throw around when he wants something done. A high strength or intelligence is an advantage, and a high social standing is no different.

So what's the best way to handle nobles in a campaign? What does it mean that a character has a noble social standing? How can a character become a noble? Answering these questions is important to getting the most fun from the game. Noble status does accord a character a special place in the Imperium, but it also obliges certain responsibilities to prevent abuses of this power.

INTRODUCTORY REFERENCES TO NOBLES

Nobles and social standing in **Traveller** have been briefly discussed in several other works, which the referee might want to read. *Citizens of the Imperium* includes rules for generating Noble class characters. *Library Data, N-Z* gives additional background on the Imperial nobility. Ordinary social standings (those less than A) were discussed in the "Gaming Digest" column in the Issue 7 of the *Travellers' Digest.*

To quote from Issue 7 on the subject of ordinary social standings, "In general, a character's status will be less when he is away from his home world. On 'average' Imperial worlds, having normal tech levels and ordinary Vilani-Solomani Imperial cultural influences, this reduction will ordinarily be only 1 point of social standing."

For a noble, social standing drops 1 when he leaves his "sphere of influence", rather than when he leaves his homeworld. A noble's sphere of influence is the enviroment in which he is acknowledged, and which he affects accordingly.

Any social standing value above A is considered nobility in **Traveller**. Each social standing value above A is associated with a standard rank. In addition, nobles in the Third Imperium are further divided into three types: honor (achievement), rank (position), and high (service). In Imperial terms, a character is noble by having a patent from the proper authority, conferring nobility upon him.

HONOR NOBLES

Honor nobles are also known as Achievement or Award nobles. The emperor grants these patents to citizens for "heroism in the military, success in civil or commercial enterprise, or innovation and discovery in the sciences."

Only patents for knights, baronets, barons, and marquis may be issued for achievement; patents for counts and other high ranks are too important to be given as a mere reward.

Each year on Holiday, the first day of the new year, a list of new patents is published on Capital. From this tradition comes

the term "holiday noble", referring derisively to nobles serving no real administrative function in the Imperium. Notwithstanding, honor nobles are the real celebrities of the Imperium, most popular with non-nobles.

Honor nobles' achievements are deemed important enough to warrant attention from the Emperor. Sphere of influence for such a noble extends to where the achievement of the noble is no longer considered significant. This can extend quite far, but note that sphere of influence is not necessarily physical distance.

One knighted for a discovery in gravitics might have status among other physicists all over the Imperium, while having no real fame among musicians or businessmen. Honor nobles sometimes travel on the interstellar "lecture and cocktail circuit"; remuneration for public speaking can provide a valuable income.

RANK NOBLES

Patents for rank nobility are given because of a citizen's position, and all noble classes are eligible for such a patent. Members of the rank nobility belong to one of two subtypes.

The first subtype (I) can be referred to as "local nobility", who make up the majority of those titled within the Imperium. These nobles serve as Imperial representatives in systems that have a government (or lack thereof) somehow not conducive to administration by high nobility. These representatives are generally equivalent in social standing to barons and knights, occupying "specific governmental offices".

Patents for rank nobles are typically hereditary, remaining with families of local leaders from generation to generation. Essentially, the sphere of influence of local rank nobles encompasses one star system. Although these nobles often have little power outside their local sphere of influence, they may be recognized by other local nobles. Note that nobles of this type are members of the *peerage* (body of peers, or body of nobles), albeit of low precedence.

The second subtype (II) of rank noble are citizens who hold Imperial office. Often, these nobles are administrators of worlds or territories with no formal Imperial representation. Because the title is tied to a position, these patents are not hereditary. Here, a noble's sphere of influence includes operational territories and/or influence among others within a specialized field. These patents often include a generous letter of pension to keep the character comfortable after a career of long and faithful service.

Patents for rank nobles are awarded as needed, generally upon assumption of duties. Patents may be revoked or transferred at the conclusion of duties, but use of the noble title is still allowed.

HIGH NOBLES

Most campaigns assume that all nobility are high nobles. In truth, however, the high nobility is the smallest segment of the peerage. These nobles belong to old and powerful families, entrenched in the Imperial system for generations. Because of this, these nobles are also the most difficult nobles to play or referee—powerful, but hampered by the responsibilities of office.

The rare titles of the high nobility are given for "political support in office, victory in the military, contributions or economic assistance from the commercial sector" beyond any reasonable expectation. Patents are hereditary (upon confirmation) and almost always include a fief or feudal estate, granted by a letter of enfeoffment.

These nobles directly administer Imperial territories, and are personal representatives of the Emperor. Members of the high nobility are trained from birth to lead, with enormous personal power to sustain the awesome responsibility of holding together an interstellar community. When successors to title cannot fulfill their duties, supporters or the noble family can take (often drastic) steps to see responsibilities fulfilled.

In addition to imperial title and enfeoffment, the High noble frequently holds titles of lesser precedence, which may include other local titles. A high noble's sphere of influence is essentially the area administered by his local peerage.

The high peers have precedence in the peerage, and thus are the most powerful of the nobility. Even their barons are immensely powerful, having almost direct control of entire economies. High nobles spend large amounts of time and resources developing their territories. But all high nobles realize that in the end, it is the successful management of populations that insure continuity in the Imperium.

"Social standing indicates the social 'weight' a character can throw around when he wants something done. A high strength or intelligence is an advantage, and a high social standing is no different."

THE IMPERIAL NOBILITY: GUIDELINES

A hereditary nobility lends stability to government, and the Imperium needs stability. Thus, excepting some rank nobles, nobility is hereditary once confirmed. Confirmation thus becomes a major concern to nobles-in-waiting, even if it is nearly certain. Where confirmation is less than certain, a would-be noble (or family) will go to great lengths to prove competence.

Members of a titled noble's family are accorded the same social standing as the titled noble. Therefore, noble social standing can also indicate a second son of a noble, or a wife, for example, depending on the line of succession.

Nobles may have more than one patent of nobility and thus more than one title. This happens when the social standing of a character (or his relatives) is raised on two or more separate occasions. If a noble has more than one hereditary patent, these may be split among one's children, dividing accompanying titles and fiefs as well.

Nobles answer to authority, but in a rather circumspect way. Loyalty to superiors is inspired by past performance. Nobles

have few real obligations to rule over other nobles of lesser rank, unless specifically declared as a lord or sovereign. At the same time, lesser nobles will not themselves be loyal unless they are treated well.

All nobles are answerable to the peerage, where matters of protocol, honor, and law are handled. Since nobles of the same rank are considered equals, they are not bound by each other's laws concerning lessers (the non-peerage). Protocol would require, of course, that one honor the dictates of a noble of higher rank within the local peerage.

While these rules apply to most situations, it is the exception that proves the rule. In some situations, a lesser noble may actually be "pulling the strings" of a noble with a higher rank. This could make for an interesting adventure situation: imagine a powerful baron, not even empowered over a world, manipulating subsector events...

THE PEERAGE

All nobles beneath a subsector duke belong to the local peerage of that duke. A noble outside of the territorial authority of the local peerage is a representative of his local duke.

Within the peerage, nobles of equal social standing are equivalent in the eyes of the emperor, with precedence established first by position held, then by date of patent (known as ascendancy).

The peerage regulates itself through standard codes of behavior known as the protocols, which exist at multiple levels. At the Imperial level there is standardization, but within local peerages one can find a wide diversity in protocols, to accommodate variant cultures and their traditions (including alien ones).

For example, within this context might be the right to bear arms, or the right to call for Imperial justice. The protocols provide a form of "diplomatic immunity" protecting nobles from costly cultural mistakes, which can happen, even considering the safeguards of the protocol. This immunity protects nobles only from a government's laws set by other peers.

If a noble gets into trouble, it is up to his peerage to aid him. In the case where a world's nobility does not control the local government(s), representatives of the local peerage may have to bail out their fellow under the guise of "Imperial intervention".

A violation of the protocols are at best considered a huge breache of taste and ethics; at worst, it may be cause for patent review, which could lead to a recommendation that a patent be revoked. Recommendations from local peerages carry much weight with the emperor.

Protocols aside, nobles have few obligations in terms of provisions for each other, notwithstanding the payment of taxes, attendance of summits, and settlement of disputes that fall within each other's jurisdiction. Members of the peerage are largely autonomous, with few restrictions on their activities, especially if they are in a backwater.

In most cases, the intelligent noble will follow the local dictates of a peer simply out of respect and courtesy. It should become evident to the potential noble player that it is important to cultivate good relations within one's local peerage! Otherwise, the wheels of justice might grind ever so slowly...

NOBLES AND THE LAW

The rights nobles have under local law is of major concern in most campaigns involving nobles. Nobles are subject to all the Imperial laws any other citizen is. Local laws may be another matter.

Where a noble is not under the auspices of the local laws of a peer or the protocols, he is accorded the rights of any Imperial citizen. With regard to personal safety, he is allowed (applying to retinue and bodyguards) to "bear arms" to his content, armed (with respect to any peers in mind) discreetly.

Bearing arms in the presence of a superior peer may be a serious breach of protocol. On the other hand, cultural influences within a local peerage might dictate that a noble must bear arms in the presence of another peer. Failure to do so could be a form of disrespect, as serious a breach as bearing weapons when inappropriate! Obviously, one of the first responsibilities of a noble when outside of his own local peerage is to acquaint himself with local protocols.

Additional privileges might include the ability to set and revoke local law levels or trade policies. This does not make the noble immune to the repercussions of these changes, however. Preferential (or occasionally free) starship passage is another noble privilege. Nobles may also accept diplomatic "gifts" from neighbors, Zhodani, or even radical Vargr. Nobles may also call for Imperial justice, or trial by peers. Certain rank nobles may be able to mete out Imperial justice or grant pardons. As the ultimate Imperial power, a noble might even carry an Imperial Warrant as described in *Library Data, A-M.*

KNIGHTS

By definition, knights are of a different breed of nobility. They are *not* members of the peerage, yet they hold titles of patent. They possess different privileges compared to other nobility. Knighthood is initially given by the emperor or an archduke as a reward of some type. A knighthood is very coveted by non-nobles, and is seen as more attainable than membership in the peerage.

Knights are not members of the peerage, and are thus not subject to the protocol. Knights instead belong to orders of knighthood, awarding privileges according to the order. Each order has its own code—some lax, some stringent—and member knights are expected to abide by these codes.

Nobles of higher standing generally respect the orders of knighthood. Members of the Peerage generally consider knights "separate but equal" members of the nobility. It is considered a breach of protocol for a member of the peerage to treat a knight with disrespect.

In cases where a member of the peerage also holds title to an order of knighthood, he is expected to abide by both the protocol and the code of his order, with conflicts in behavior resolved in favor of the protocol.

Member knights of an order classed as "Defenders of the Realm" are usually permitted to carry weaponry in excess of local law levels, even in the presence of a greater noble. In fact, some orders require the presence of a weapon at all times. Often these weapons are ceremonial (but still lethal). Still, few orders of knighthood would require a knight carry a PGMP-13 to a royal wedding.

NOBLES AND ADVENTURES

Mentioned earlier were some motivations for nobles in **Traveller**. Within the scope of a campaign, nobles will react to threats to their continuous income, noble standing, or the stability of their sphere of influence. Nobles must also support Imperial interests (including the Navy and Scout Service).

Political systems and predictions through external agencies can provide backdrop for adventure. On Regina, for example, computer simulations of political events have a reputation for

being quite accurate. Often leaders base their courses of action on these models.

One of the mainstays of **Traveller** campaigns has been the noble patron. To lend realism, remember that one rarely gets something for nothing. A noble will become a patron to accomplish some goal of his own—which may be at cross purposes to those of the characters. A patron can support a character of an unusual type: artist, dancer, sports figure, or archaeologist. If these characters become successful, they might be awarded patents of their own! This kind of patronage brings high status within the peerage.

Conversely, a noble can be a formidable enemy, using the characters as pawns (or targets) in Machiavellian intrigues, furthering some personal motivation with total disregard for others. On Skull, a planet with truly morbid cultural patterns, there is a saying: "Only the dead and those joining them dine with nobility."

UNDERSTANDING NOBLE CHARACTERS

The social standing characteristic is generated independently from other characteristics, and oftentimes these values seem contradictory. Finding ways to explain these characteristics can add spice to the game.

Extraordinary values for strength, dexterity, endurance, or intelligence in a noble could be a result of selective breeding, inbreeding, or just the effects of planetary conditions. A noble might need special medication even to survive, or a symbiosis with some rare planetary lifeform may exist. Natives of Inthe, for example, develop a symbiosis with air plankton (a spore-like plant), allowing them to survive breathing the thin atmosphere of the homeworld without compressors.

Variant intelligence values might mean the noble is a remittance man (or someone else is running the show—and the noble is out adventuring). High intelligence and education with low physical characteristics may indicate strong ambition.

An NPC noble may have low intelligence, with adventurers charged to keep him out of trouble. A bureaucracy may be running the administration, while the errant noble does what he pleases (controlled by the referee).

If nobles have the resources to get the best of everything, a low education score may indicate a character's peculiarity. The noble's homeworld may be a poor world or have a low tech level. The noble may be a rebel or dilettante, not wanting or feeling the need for an education. More exotically, there may be a cultural or religious bias against education or progress, and toward retaining or refining the status quo.

THE PLANET MAKES THE MAN

When defining a character, choosing a homeworld for him adds an exotic air that only a **Traveller** campaign can have. Determining the details of systems and worlds can be accomplished easily with *Scouts*, *Grand Survey*, and *Grand Census*. The characteristics of a homeworld play a more important role in the life of a noble than in the life of the average character.

Stellar type and system/world composition add color (orange suns on the horizon, for example) but more importantly, they also influence the resources available, determining industry, social traditions and direction.

The population in a noble's sphere of influence is one of his most important resources. How many sentients does he control? As important as population is government type. In what way does the noble influence the population of the world in question? Do they influence him? The gauge of the interaction between the government and the population is the law level. What kind of system exists, and what is expected of the noble? Is the system liberal, conservative, or moderate? The presence of an indigent alien population can also affect a noble's personality.

The economic stance of the world strongly influences rank and high nobles. How the planet performs economically and what it is worth can be determined using *Trillion Credit Squadron* and *Striker*.

Tech level is perhaps the first value players look at in a planetary profile, but it is not in itself an indicator of power. Indigenous resources make a powerful, influential noble. Resources also include information, natural resources, and the population.

Always consider the factor of a local system/planetary defense. This alone might determine who's really in charge among a local peerage.

PLAYING THE NOBLE

Nobles are frequently surrounded by NPCs. Those in a noble's personal life include his immediate family and line of succession, fellow adventurers, concubines, and mentor. In **Traveller**, a mentor NPC can serve as a mouthpiece for the referee, advising what a "good noble" would do.

Those in the professional life of a noble include his secretary, bodyguards, administrators, warriors, and peers. Occasionally, a noble will also employ freelances, covert agents and even assassins.

The advantages of nobility include the best of supplies and living accessories. Nobles won't skimp—to do so would compromise status. But be wary of allowing NPC nobles to give away money or equipment. The ability to do something is not sufficient motivation to do it! If a party pursues a noble's cause, funding may be appropriate. Consider carefully how the noble views the adventurers before backing them.

A noble's education and lifestyle are stringently planned if he is in line to assume title. Nobles generally get fine educations—optionally, skills are awarded early, possibly as soon as age 10 or 14. Unless incognito, a noble is almost always a leader of sorts. Noble characters should try to cultivate leader, liaison, and carousing skills. Nobles often have strong ties with Imperial military personnel.

NOW FOR THE BAD NEWS

Of course, there are also responsibilities to being titled, beyond continued support and fealty to the emperor.

A noble's most valuable resource is his birthright, therefore rigid patterns of identification may become necessary. Some sort of mechanical ID might be used: signet rings, scepters, and ceremonial weapons have historical precedents. These items often are linked to the homeworld, and become priceless.

Biological IDs (a deformity, birthmark, or genetically engineered code) may also be used. Despite advancements in cloning and geneering, nobles may not be eligible for certain types of medical treatment. In most cases, taking anagathics or other such rejuvenation treatment is cause for revocation of patent.

Nobility is hereditary, based on a genetic heritage. Anything that alters a character's genetics would be disallowed immediately. RNA memory transfers also might not be allowed. Anything that could compromise the identity of one in power will be suspect.

At least in public, honor and rank nobles are expected to conform to the social conventions of their sphere of influence. The nobles of Cogri, for example, are ceremonially blinded upon ascendency, in recollection of an event in which actions of the hereditary nobility caused hundreds of citizens on that world to be struck blind by the intense rays of their sun.

A culture may be prejudiced against certain technologies like bionics, interfacers, or robots—or the society may be against regeneration, transplants, or other types of medical treatments. Thus, nobles often have quirks that other players might not have, lending flavor to the game.

For instance, nobles might have to use breath masks, or wear eye patches. To counteract other disabilities, nobles may have to use exotic technical solutions, such as powered grav chairs equipped with life support. Fortunately, most nobles have the resources to purchase these costly devices—the Marquis of Inthe, when not in null-g areas, must wear a delicate powered exoskeleton to counter frailties reportedly due to inbreeding.

Of course, the upper crust of the Imperium are also expected to avoid any involvement with psionics: certainly the emperor is not about to publicly admit a psionic noble.

Finally, there may be irritating sociocultural or religious traditions hampering the life of a noble. Prohibitions may exist on certain recreations, or perhaps eating in public, throwing a kink into a noble character's play.

Even certain lifestyles or careers may be deemed "inappropriate" for a member of the nobility. A high or rank noble in particular may not be able to travel far from his home, because of a required presence on the world for some type of ceremony or event.

DETERMINING NOBLE STATUS

A character may become a noble in one of two ways. The character may have a high enough value when he first rolls two dice to determine his social standing, showing that the character was "born" into nobility. Or, the character may "become" a noble by increasing social standing during the mustering out process, thus being awarded with a patent at that time for service.

Natural Nobles: If the character rolls an initial social standing of B or C, he is automatically a hereditary noble. Determine what noble type he is by rolling on the Noble Types Table.

Next, determine whether the character actually holds the patent himself or is merely a member of a noble's family. This should be determined by the referee, or alternatively by rolling 1D6, where a 1 indicates Patent holder, and 2-6 indicates a position in line for the patent (a family member).

If the character is a high noble, choose a homeworld (or system) as a base of operations. The referee must examine the homeworld government type and decide how the noble (family) interacts with the homeworld government.

If the character is a rank noble, choose a world for him to represent to the Imperium and decide how the family interacts with the local government, and how the Imperium is represented by the noble.

Service Nobles: If the character increases his social standing to a noble level during the mustering out process, he is awarded a patent at that time. Roll one die to determine the number of patents the character holds: a roll of of 1 indicates two patents, and 2-6 indicates one patent. Determine what noble type(s) he is by rolling on the Noble Types Table once for each patent.

The character may choose whatever title (or titles) he deems appropriate according to the local culture he is under.

If the patent is for high nobility, it includes enfeoffment (an estate). Choose its location and size. Determine an approximate value and yearly income derived from it. Determine what its maintenance costs should be. Modify the character's sphere of influence accordingly.

If the patent is for rank nobility, carefully study the prior service career of the character. Considering the service history and rank, select an appropriate position within the Imperial or local administrative structure. Determine the sphere of influence for the title. Determine the rights and responsibilities for the position.

If the patent is for honor, then study the past service history and rank of the character. Choose an event or accomplishment to warrant the grant of title to the character.

Noble Types Table

1 Honor
2 Honor
3 High
4 Rank (I)
5 Rank (I)
6 Rank (I)
7 Rank (II)
8 Rank (II)

Roll one die on the above table for each patent.
DMs: If social standing is C+, DM+2.

Patents to honor nobles might be granted to actors, artists, authors, business and industrial leaders, diplomats, educators, explorers, frontier colonists, military personnel, musicians, religious leaders, or scientists.

Patents to rank nobles might be held by diplomats, Imperial officials, judges, members of "local" nobility, executives of megacorporations, military leaders and advisors, government ministers,or star system representatives.

Patents to high nobles might be held by the leader of a colony or low tech world, a deposed or exiled noble, a noble family, a merchant family, a military or mercenary leader, a monarch or despot, a playboy or remittance man, a societal leader, a trader, or a youngster in the line of succession.¤

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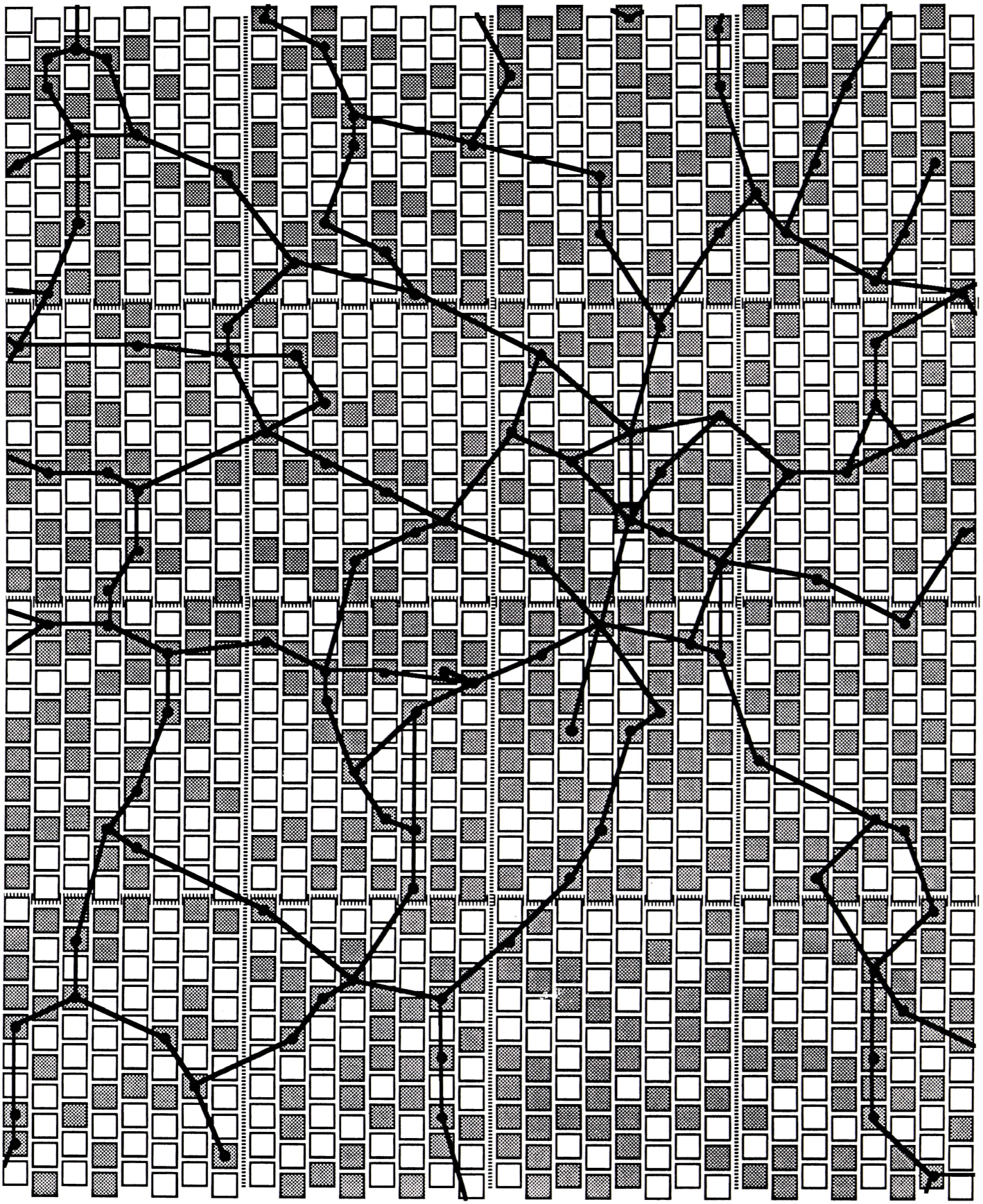


Xboat Routes of the Core Sector

Library Data of the Core Sector

Subfile on Bunkeria and Cemplas Subsectors

—by Dale L. Kemper

Achenaar Antilles Line: The largest merchant trading and passenger line in the Great Spiral area of the Sylean Main, operating over 1,000 ships of all sizes throughout the Core Sector. Rualto Achenaar and Joffan Antilles founded the line on F'rnow (Core 0722) in -567, during the years of Interstellar Confederacy. F'rnow continues to be the central seat of operation for the sector-wide merchant line.

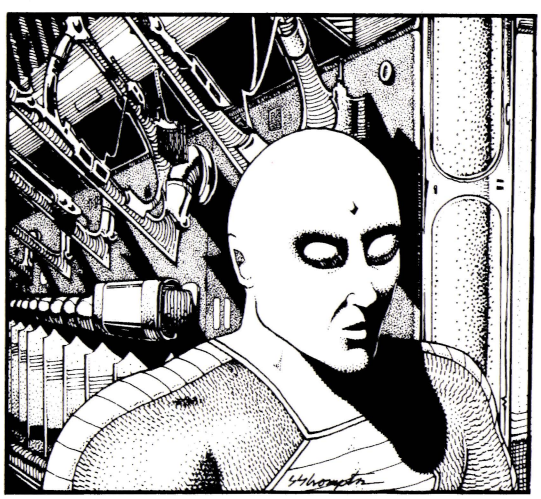
Admiral Moshe Halfview: Prominent loyalist naval commander in the closing days of the Interstellar Confederacy Civil War. The Admiral rallied the remnants of over a dozen planetary fleets into an efficient fighting force and routed the rebel forces to the Sketola system (Core 0622). The resulting Battle of Magnia Sketola caught the rebels off-guard, and crushed the rebellion once and for all.

Historical records indicate the Admiral had an unusually high percentage of prosthetic body parts. His prosthetics included his right eye, his right arm, both his legs, and several of his internal organs. The replacements were needed to repair severe injuries he had sustained on several different bold police actions against pirates. The Admiral was well known and feared by many pirates—he relentlessly raided interstellar pirate bands in the years prior to the Civil War.

At the age of 132, the Admiral was killed by his fifth wife in -115. His body is currently on display in a cryogenic case at the Confederacy Naval Museum on Lalandra (Core 0821).

Admiral Lon Hazador: Renowned leader of the Confederate Navy. The Admiral lead an inspired defense of the Sketola (Core 0622) Orbital Union Starport during the opening attack of the Confederate Civil War (-239 to -237). Killed during the siege, the Admiral is revered as a hero in a large shrine at the rebuilt Sketola Orbital Union Starport.

Baron Rolf Von Toerbach: Reclusive Leader of the planet Protalus (Core 0128) during the years preceding the Confederacy Civil War (-239 to -237). Baror von Toerbach's aides saw to it that few outsiders ever saw him face to face. So prevalent was this practice that anti-confederacy propagandists took advantage of it: it was widely reported that the Baron was a hideous mutant, although some later historians dispute this claim.



Even though few ever saw the Baron, his influence created a near fanaticism in the leaders of the rebellion, who seemed bent on dominating the Great Spiral at almost any cost.

The Baron was presumed lost aboard his flagship *Tellamachia* during the final battle of the Civil War.

Battle of Velpare: Battle occurring in -258 near Velpare (Core 1623) between raiding naval squadrons of the Sylean Federation and patrolling squadrons of the Interstellar Confederacy. The Confederacy forces, poorly organized and coordinated, were easily defeated piecemeal by the Sylean commander Admiral Rudolf.

Duped by his easy victory over the system's space defenses, the Admiral decided to disobey orders and also invade the primary planet with his ships' troops. His troops met a devastating defeat at the hands of a well-organized planetary army and defense militia.

Upon his return to Sylea, Rudolf was court-marshalled for overstepping his orders and was expelled from the Sylean Navy in disgrace.

Beau-Ta-Quitala: Famous leader of the Interstellar Confederacy. Born in -269 as prince of Keplo (Core 1322), at age 23 he became head of the planetary government and served on the Confederacy Council.

Violently opposed to the policies of Baron Rolf von Toerbach of Protalus (Core 0128), Beau-Ta-Quitala was elected Chamberlain of the Confederacy in -239.

Immediately, Baron Rolf von Toerbach's representatives withdrew from the Confederacy Council. Simultaneously with the withdrawal from the Council, rebels commanded by Baron Rolf von Toerbach attacked Sketola (Core 0622), starting the Civil War.

Shortly after the Civil War, in -236, Beau-Ta-Quitala resigned from his post as Chamberlain of the Confederacy.

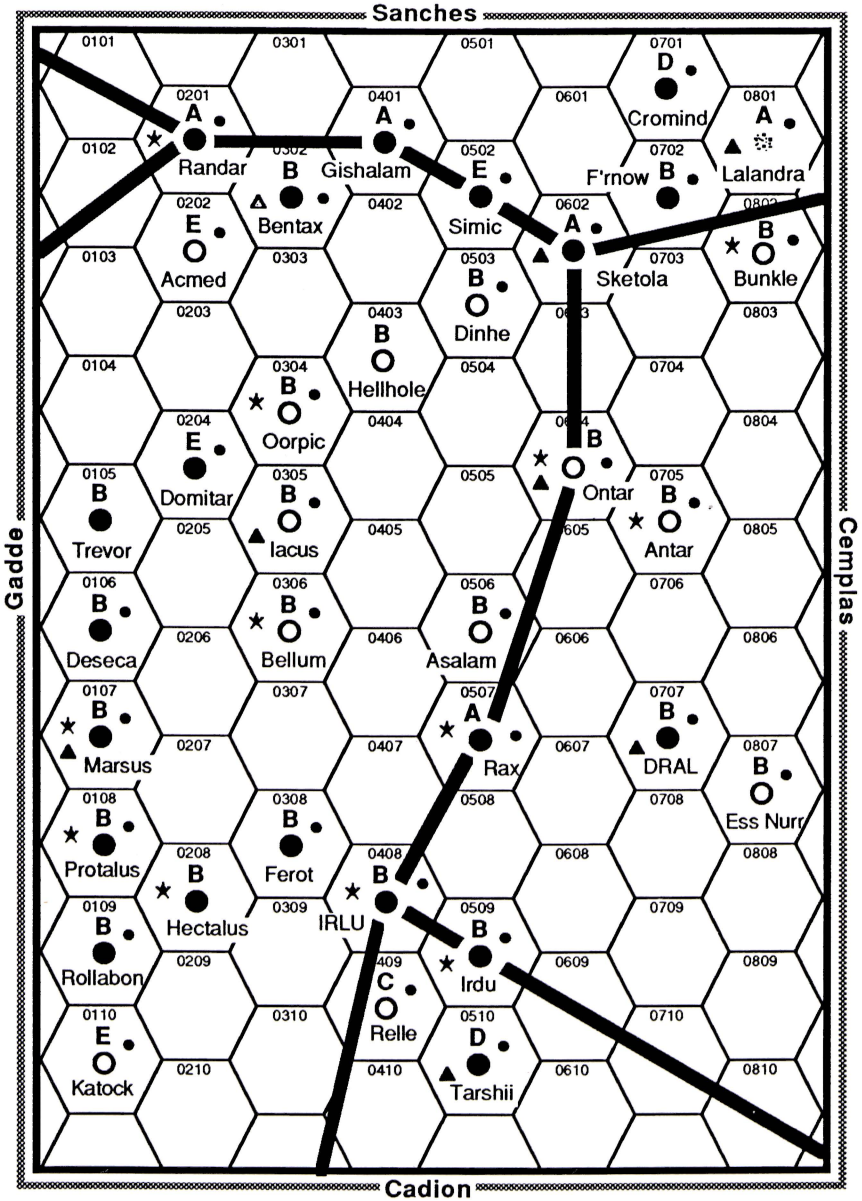
Beau-Ta-Quitala remained popular throughout the Confederacy in the years that followed. In -181, his personal cruiser *Regal Voyager* disappeared while enroute from Keplo to the

Bunkeria Subsector

The Bunkeria subsector (subsector I of the Core sector) was once the seat of the Interstellar Confederacy, the most powerful government to oppose the Sylean Federation over 1500 years ago. The Sylean Federation ultimately subdued the Interstellar Confederacy, and went on to become the Third Imperium.

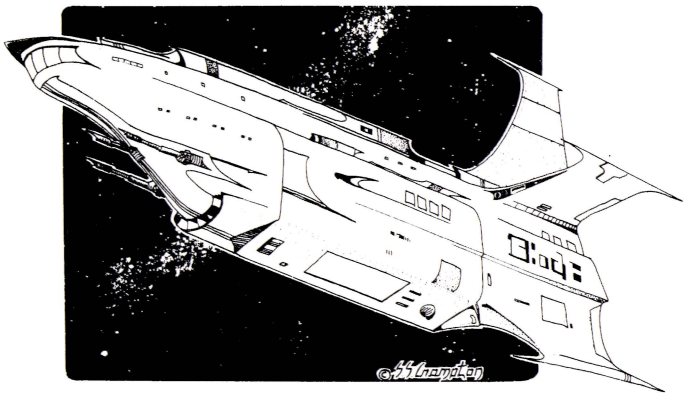
Name	*Location*	*UPP*	*Bases*	*Remarks*	
Trevor	0105	B664000-C		NonInd. Barren.	
Deseca	0106	B241762-B		Poor. Owned by Marsus.	G
Marsus	0107	B578598-B	A	Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Protalus	0108	B559463-B	N	NonInd. Owned by Marsus.	G
Rollabon	0109	B984331-8		NonInd.	G
Katock	0110	E200301-C		NonInd. Vacuum world.	G
Randar	0201	A789567-D	N	NonInd. Owned by Gishalam.	G
Acmed	0202	E210669-8		NonAg. NonInd. Owned by Gishalam.	G
Domitar	0204	E234147-6		NonInd.	G
Hectalus	0208	B565301-A	N	NonInd.	
Bentax	0302	B242275-E	W	NonInd. Poor.	G
Oorpic	0304	B413777-B	N	NonAg. Ice-capped.	G
Iacus	0305	B210757-C	S	NonAg.	G
Bellum	0306	B340401-B	N	NonInd. Poor. Desert world.	G
Ferot	0308	B253432-D		NonInd. Poor.	G
Gishalam	0401	A887325-D		NonInd.	G
Hellhole	0403	B400555-F	S	NonInd. Vacuum world.	
Irlu	0408	B53598C-F	N		G
Relle	0409	C9B9665-A		NonInd. Fluid hyd. Owned by Irlu.	G
Simic	0502	E362554-8		NonInd.	G
Dinhe	0503	B590444-D		NonInd. Desert world.	G
Asalam	0506	B200346-D		NonInd. Vacuum world.	G
Rax	0507	A357110-B	N	NonInd.	G
Irdu	0509	B386521-C	N	Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Tarshii	0510	D433565-7	S	NonInd. Poor.	G
Sketola	0602	A647789-E	S	Subsector Capital. Agricultural.	G
Ontar	0604	B100213-E	A	NonInd. Vacuum world.	G
Cromind	0701	D251579-9		NonInd. Poor.	G
F'rnow	0702	B361576-A		NonInd.	G
Antar	0705	B411111-D	N	NonInd. Ice-capped	G
Dral	0707	B728967-F	S	Industrial. Military Rule.	G
Lalandra	0801	A000322-F	S	NonInd. Asteroid belt.	G
Dunkle	0802	B140000-D	N	NonInd. Poor. Desert world. Barren.	G
Ess Nurr	0807	B350400-C		NonInd. Poor. Desert world.	G

The Bunkeria subsector contains 34 worlds with a total population of 15.855 billion. The highest population is 9.8 billion at Dral; the highest tech level is F at Hellhole, Irlu, Dral, and Lalandra. All worlds are members of the Imperium.



Bunkeria Subsector

Subsector I of the Core Sector



Confederacy capitol on Sketola (Core 0622).

Boss Tarkel: Famous rebel leader during the Civil War. Known throughout the Interstellar Confederacy for his shady dealings, Boss Tarkel joined forces with the rebels shortly after Baron Rolf von Toerbach's attack on Sketola (Core 0622). Boss Tarkel was killed when his flagship *Prince of Death* was destroyed in the Battle of Magnia Sketola (-237).

Civil War of the Interstellar Confederacy (-239 to -237): Internal dissension within the Interstellar Confederacy finally resulted in the outbreak of hostilities late in -239 when combined forces from Protalus, Marsus, Iacus, Oorpic, and Domitar attacked the Confederacy Capitol of Sketola (Core 0622).

The rebel forces, commanded by the fanatical Baron Rolf von Toerbach, swept aside the system's defenses, subdued the orbital starport complex, and landed three crack divisions of Marsian troops on the world's surface. Within two months, the entire surface of Sketola was in rebel hands.

The Confederacy government withdrew to Keplo (Core 1322) and rallied their forces. The Confederacy was essentially cut in half, with the rebels controlling most of the Great Spiral systems in the Bunkeria subsector, while the loyalists controlled those in the Cemplas subsector.

A series of minor raids and squirmishes occurred over the next year and a half, but no major actions were fought. Finally, in -237, the rebel fleet attempted to open a second front at Belicose (Core 1523). After a protracted battle in the system, the rebels were forced to withdraw back to Sketola. The loyalist's Internal Security Force inflicted particularly severe losses to the rebel forces lead by the famous pirate leader, Boss Tarkel.

The Confederacy pursued the rebels back to Sketola. Once in the system, the Confederacy forces trapped the rebels near Magnia Sketola (the system's largest gas giant) and crushed the remnants of the rebel fleet, ending the Civil War.

The Civil War severely weakened the military might of the Interstellar Confederacy, effectively eliminating it as a serious contender for domination of the Core Sector. Without the Civil War, the Confederacy would have been a serious rival to the Sylean Federation, and as such could have radically affected the founding of the Third Imperium.

Colonel Meke Noore: Commander of the last surviving Internal Security Force installation located in the city of Amnon on Sketola. Colonel Noore died during the rebel invasion of Sketola which opened the Civil War. He and his command refused to surrender to the attacking Marsian Grav-Armor Division, even though the Colonel's forces were vastly outnumbered.

Colonel Noore's book *Principles of Defensive Warfare* is still required reading at many Imperial Military Academies.

Confederacy Naval Administration (CNA): Official title for the "starship navy" of the Interstellar Confederacy. Based at Lalandra (Core 0821), the CNA's full-time fleet arm acted merely as a police force, consisting mainly of small patrol ships. In the event of a war emergency, the CNA was to take control of the various planetary navies in the Confederacy.

In actual practice, the CNA was less than effective in controlling the planetary navies—who often disregarded the CNA's coordination efforts in a time of crisis.

During the Sylean Expansion Wars (-201 to -100), a number of poor strategic moves on the part of the Confederacy forces resulted in the Confederacy giving way to the expanding Sylean Federation. While the Confederacy's planetary navies may have "won the battle" here and there against the Syleans, they ultimately "lost the war" because of their failure to heed the strategic recommendations of the CNA commanders.

The old CNA complex on Lalandra has become a popular museum and tourist attraction of the Third Imperium, drawing many offworlders from throughout the nearby subsectors.

Exatar Project: One of the few innovative technological projects of the Interstellar Confederacy.

The test ship *Exatar*was designed in -248 as a ramscoop jumpship. A ramscoop jumpship is designed to gather interstellar hydrogen before and after a jump—in theory, if such a ship could operate efficiently, it would never need to refuel at a starport or gas giant—having essentially limitless range. The disadvantage of such a ship is that it takes many weeks of constant acceleration on maneuver drive to gather enough hydrogen for a jump.

The first tests of the *Exatar* in and around the Confederacy were moderately successful and two more ships, the *Macnamara* and *Esdyla,* were started in -241.

Unfortunately, the building yards on the moon of Sketola (Core 0622) were captured during the first stages of the Confederacy Civil War, and the rebels destroyed the two new ships in their stocks. The rebels captured the *Exatar* intact and used it as a spy ship throughout the conflict; it was decommissioned shortly after the end of hostilities.

No further interest was ever expressed in the project after the war.

Grand Senator Rom Debeshuut: Considered the founder of the Interstellar Confederacy, Debeshuut was an outstanding leader during its early years.

Debeshuut was a gifted scientist with a knack at cutting through interworld animosities and rallying others to his cause. While some historians feel his methods bordered on terseness and bluntness, he did succeed in organizing several worlds to form the Interstellar Confederacy and in eliciting their continued cooperation thereafter.

Debeshuut died in -683, shortly after the Interstellar Confederacy was formed.

Great Spiral: An alternate name for the 32 worlds of the Sylean Main once dominated by the Interstellar Confederacy (circa -684 to -1).

Hellhole/Bunkeria (0423 B-400555-F): Hellhole's crust abounds with exotic minerals and heavy metals, making it one of the most profitable mining worlds in the Core Sector. In the tech level 11 civilization of the old Interstellar Confederacy, Hellhole was a dangerous planet on which to mine. Today, with modern TL 15 technology, the vacc miners of

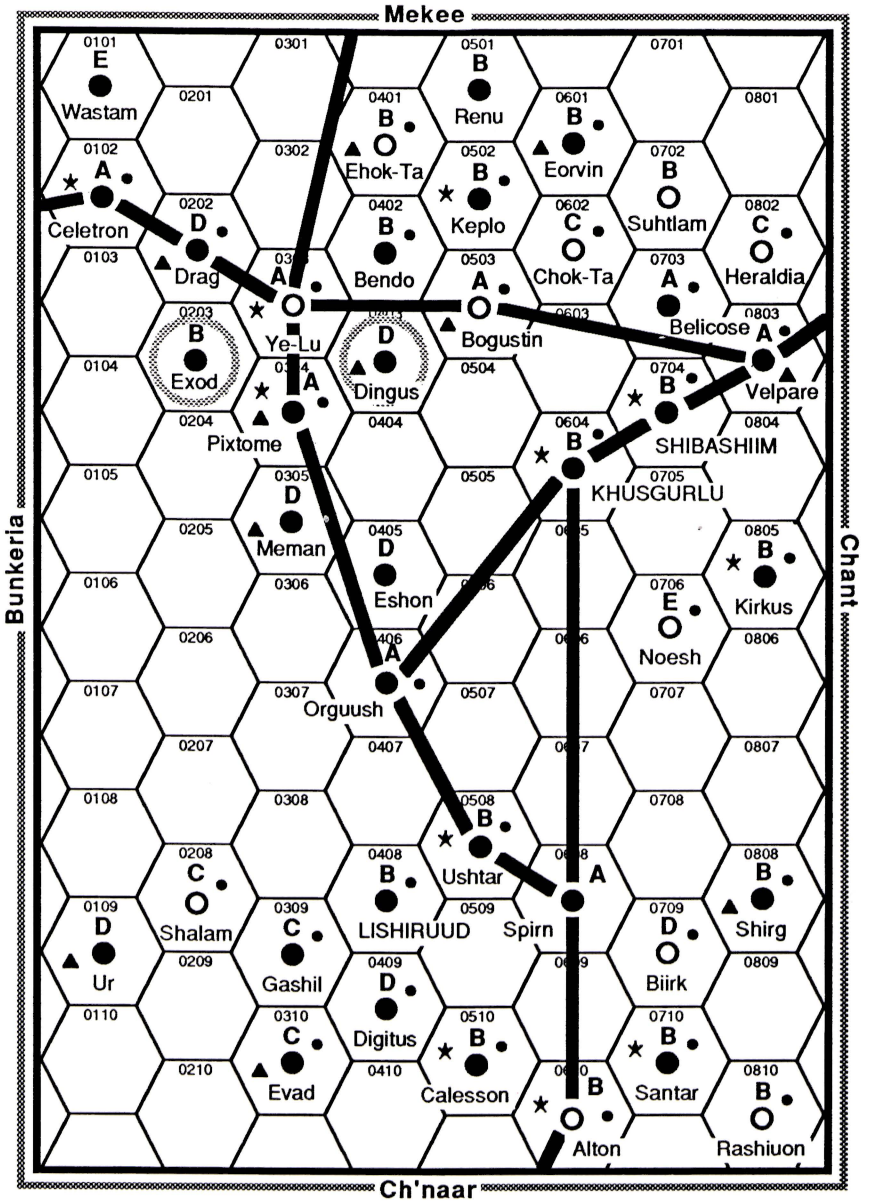
Cemplas Subsector

The Cemplas subsector (subsector J of the Core sector) is one of the more advanced subsectors, with two worlds rated at tech level 16.

Hundreds of robots man the class A starport at Ye-Lu, and Shibashliim is experimenting with matter transport.

Name	*Location*	*UPP*	*Bases*	*Remarks*	
Wastam	0101	E6A7777-8		Fluid hydrosphere.	
Celetron	0102	A375000-F	N	NonInd. Barren.	G
Ur	0109	D649577-A	S	NonInd.	
Drag	0202	D473322-6	S	NonInd.	G
Exod	0203	B323555-B		NonInd. Poor.	A
Shalam	0208	C250644-A		NonInd. Poor. Desert world.	G
Ye-lu	0303	A100134-G	N	NonInd. Vacuum world.	G
Pixtome	0304	A8AA453-F	A	NonInd. Fluid hydosphere world.	G
Meman	0305	D652552-9	S	NonInd. Poor.	
Gashil	0309	C6A4511-8		NonInd. Fluid hydrosphere.	G
Evad	0310	C79A468-C	S	NonInd. Water world. Owned by Ushtar.	G
Ehok-ta	0401	BAD5446-9	S	NonInd. Fluid hydrosphere.	G
Bendo	0402	B577875-8			G
Dingus	0403	D556444-9	S	NonInd.	A
Eshon	0405	E341766-7		Poor. Owned by Orguush.	
Orguush	0406	A485334-D		NonInd.	G
Lishiruud	0408	B6979AA-7		Industrial.	G
Digitus	0409	D35469A-5		Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Renu	0501	B66468B-7		Agricultural. NonInd. Rich.	
Keplo	0502	B675898-B	N		G
Bogustin	0503	A3105AC-F	S	NonInd.	G
Ushtar	0508	B647554-D	N	Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Calesson	0510	B685643-8		Agricultural. NonInd. Rich.	
Eorvin	0601	B436868-B	S	Owned by Keplo.	G
Chok-Ta	0602	C7C2048-B		NonInd. Fluid hydrosphere.	G
Khusgurlu	0604	B6529EG-D	N	Poor.	G
Spirn	0608	A656541-C		Agricultural. NonInd.	
Alton	0610	B100542-F	N	NonInd. Vacuum world.	G
Suhtlam	0702	B7C0000-A		NonInd. Desert world. Barren.	
Belicose	0703	A596236-C		NonInd.	G
Shibashliim	0704	B626A8C-G	N	Industrial	G
Noesh	0706	E403472-8		NonInd. Vacuum world. Ice-capped.	G
Biirk	0709	D210101-9		NonInd.	G
Santar	0710	B563101-E	N	NonInd.	G
Heraldia	0802	C120576-D		NonInd. Poor. Desert world.	G
Velpare	0803	A567634-9	S	Subsector Capital. Agricult. NonInd.	G
Kirkus	0805	B885640-B	N	Agricultural. NonInd. Rich.	G
Shirg	0808	B6337C9-B	S	NonAg. Poor.	G
Rashiuon	0810	B130221-E		NonInd. Poor. Desert world.	G

The Cemplas subsector contains 39 worlds with a total population of 47.329 billion. The highest population is 40.4 billion at Shibashliim; the highest tech level is G at Ye-Lu and Shibashliim. All worlds are members of the Imperium.



Cemplas Subsector

Subsector J of the Core Sector

Hellhole rarely have to enter the mines.

Heraldia/Cemplas (1622 C-120576-D): A small desert world, Heraldia's atmosphere was irrevocably tainted by nearly a century of raids and battles fought between the Sylean Federation and the Interstellar Confederacy (circa -201 to -100). Prior to this time, the surface was livable, having a thin atmosphere and a 13% hydrosphere.

Since the time of the Sylean Expansion Wars, the remaining inhabitants of the world have been forced to survive in protective domes and underground structures, away from the blazing solar radiation. The current inhabitants of Heraldia are particularly proud of their battle-scarred past.

Internal Security Force (ISF): The paramilitary law-enforcement and intelligence agency of the Interstellar Confederacy. The ISF was responsible for the maintenance of order within the Confederacy and for the cessation of "dangerous" contact with outsiders who ventured into the Interstellar Confederacy without permission. Also in times of crisis, the ISF acted as a cadre of the Confederacy army. Many worlds within the Great Spiral still have vestiges of the ISF within their governments.

Interstellar Confederacy: A loosely allied collection of 32 star systems within the Bunkeria and Cemplas subsectors. The Interstellar Confederacy was the largest interstellar government to oppose the Sylean Federation during their 650 year ascendence in the Core Sector.

Formed in -684, the Confederacy was primarily interested in preventing any further technological decline of its member worlds. The Interstellar Confederacy stopped accepting members after it absorbed 32 systems in the Great Spiral region of the Sylean Main. The Confederacy members considered the 32 systems to be the maximum that could be efficiently coordinated.

After its initial formation period, the Confederacy turned in upon itself and made no further attempts to contact adjacent systems until contacted from the outside by Sylean Federation Scout ships in -301. The meeting was an uneasy one on both sides and finally errupted into open warfare a hundred years later as the Sylean threats of expansion into Interstellar Confederacy territory increased.

The centers of power within the Interstellar Confederacy rested with the four to five tech level 12 worlds it contained. Individual planetary rights were paramount in its charter—so much so in fact that the Confederacy rarely achieved the cooperation necessary to carry out its intention to halt the slow loss of technology and loss of general prosperity.

The Interstellar Confederacy had very few contacts with outsiders, and those that it did have were generally not pleasant. However, after contact with the Sylean Federation, the Confederacy steadily weakened in influence until finally in -17 Cleon convinced a number of member worlds to pull out of the Confederacy altogether. By -1, the Interstellar Confederacy ceased to exist as a government entity, conquered more by the apathy of its members than by any hostile intent on Cleon's part.

Marsus/Bunkeria (0127 B-578598-B): One of the more powerful planets of the old Interstellar Confederacy, Marsus was known for its main planetary export: mercenary soldiers. Controlled by the government corporation Marsian Mercenaries, Unlimited, Marsus supplied troops to the highest bidder for any purpose.

Operations were very profitable until the Marsian government chose to fight on the wrong side in the Confederacy Civil War (-239 to -237). Since that time, the population of the planet has steadily declined until the current population is only one-tenth of what it was in the first four centuries of the Interstellar Confederacy.

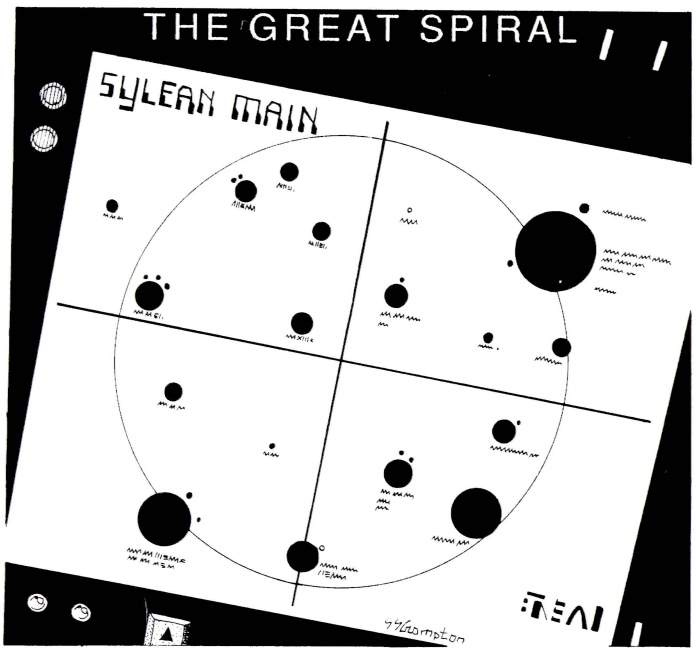
Protalus/Bunkeria (0128 B-559463-B): Protalus was the homeworld and powerbase of Baron Rolf von Toerbach, the famous rebel leader of the Interstellar Confederacy Civil War.

Today Protalus is a vassal state to Marsus, one parsec away. There is little of importance in the system except for an Imperial Naval Base. Protalus is rarely visited and is considered by many to be an unimportant backwater.

Sketola/Bunkeria (0622 A647789-E): The capitol world of the old Interstellar Confederacy. Sketola was brutally conquered by rebel forces during the Civil War (-239 to -237).

Since the time of the Interstellar Confederacy, Sketola has declined considerably in interstellar influence, although its tech level has slowly risen from 12 to 14 in last thousand years.

Sketola has one of the largest colonial Navies in the entire Core Sector. The colonial Navy shares the naval facilities with the Imperial Navy located on the moon Alamar.



"Let's Get Physical"

THE GAMING DIGEST
—by Gary L. Thomas and Bill Paley

Another **Traveller** gaming session is well under way.

"Well, Jack, what are you going to do now?" asked Sally, the referee.

Jack rubbed at his lower teeth with his thumbnail while he thought. "I guess my character is going to grab the box and run down the hallway. I'll weave back and forth in case anyone decides to take a potshot at me."

"Sorry, Jack, that box weighs 80 kilograms. You can't lift it."

"What do you mean, I can't lift it? I have a strength of 9, that's above average, and I once knew a guy in the service, he was about my size, and he could..."

Another **Traveller** gaming session is degenerating into a series of arguments.

THREE MORE CHARACTERISTICS

In the last two "Gaming Digest" columns, we have examined the use of social standing, intelligence, and education characteristics in **Traveller**. In this final article in our series on characteristics, we examine the three physical stats: strength, dexterity, and endurance. Understanding how each of these qualities works, as well as how they interrelate with each other and with other qualities, can help make a game session run more smoothly while keeping the level of fun high.

CHARACTERISTIC DEFINITIONS

Strength indicates the character's ability to apply physical force, as follows:

Strength x 1: Load in kilograms that may be carried for long periods (over 5 minutes duration to all day) and still be considered unencumbered.

Strength x 2: Load in kilograms that may be carried for long periods (over 5 minutes duration to all day), but with the disadvantage of being encumbered. When a character is encumbered with a strength x 2 load, subtract 1 from the character's strength, dexterity, and endurance.

Strength x 3: Load in kilograms that may be carried by a character in active military duty for long periods (over 5 minutes duration to all day), but with the disadvantage of being encumbered. When a character is encumbered with a strength x 3 load, subtract 2 from the character's strength, dexterity, and endurance.

Strength x 5: Load in kilograms that may be carried for short periods (under 5 minutes duration).

Strength x 10: Load in kilograms that may be lifted (but not carried) and held up for less than 1 minute.

Strength x 15. Load in kilograms that may be dragged for short periods (less than 5 minutes duration).

Different Gravity: These values for strength assume a gravity of 1 G (generally a large (size 8) world). To modify the character's strength for a world with a different gravity, divide the character's strength by the gravity of the world in Gs. For example, when on a world with a gravity of only 0.125 Gs, a character with a strength of 7 would have a strength of 7 divided by 0.125, or 56.

Dexterity measures physical coordination. Dexterity is used to aid tasks where hand-eye coordination or agility is important. Performing mechanical repairs, shooting firearms, or walking a treacherous ledge are all instances where dexterity is important.

Endurance measures physical stamina, as follows:

Endurance x 1: Number of waking hours until suffering the effects of fatigue. Once fatigued, subtract one point from endurance for every two additional waking hours. Relaxing (undertaking no tasks) for any two hour period temporarily halts the loss of endurance, and "buys back" one point of lost

endurance. If and when endurance reaches zero, the character is exhausted, and collapses.

Once collapsed (endurance is zero), the character must sleep for 8 hours in order to return to his or her full non-fatigued endurance level. Getting less than 8 hours of sleep (but at least 4 hour's worth) returns the character's endurance to its full level, but the effects of fatigue start immediately. Getting less than 4 hours of sleep (but at least 1 hour's worth) returns the character's endurance to one-half of its normal level (drop fractions), and the effects of fatigue start immediately.

Endurance x 3: Number of waking hours until a character totally collapses (endurance automatically becomes zero). After being awake for this number of hours, the character must get some sleep, no matter what.

SPECIAL COMBINATIONS

Certain combinations of characteristics have a special meaning. These special combinations are:

Strength + Dexterity + Endurance: These are the character's three physical characteristics, representing the character's *total life force*. When the sum of these three characteristics equals zero, the character is dead.

Endurance + Intelligence: Together these two characteristics indicate a character's force of will, and as such represent the character's *determination*. Determination plays a critical role in the resolution of tasks; it affects the likelihood that a character will keep trying a task when it fails. A special task called a determination task is used, with endurance and intelligence serving as the only DMs.

ESTIMATING OTHERS' CHARACTERISTICS

When meeting and dealing with other characters (especially NPCs), the referee must not simply read the character's UPP stats to the players. The players must roll tasks to estimate another character's UPP stats:

To estimate any one of a character's physical stats (str, dex, or end):

ROUTINE, medical, int (uncertain)

REFEREE: Roll one task for each physical stat. If the result of the uncertain task is:

NO TRUTH: Misrepresent the physical stat by 50% either direction.

SOME TRUTH: Misrepresent the physical stat by 20% either direction.

TOTAL TRUTH: Provide the correct physical stat value.

INJURIES

Injuries can occur in **Traveller** in several different ways. Combat obviously carries with it the potential for harm. Failing UTP rolls can result in injury if a mishap occurs. Optionally, the referee can describe these injuries in more specific terms, heightening the realism of the game. By defining the type of an injury, the referee also requires that medical treatment be of a specific type. If a character's attribute is reduced because his hand has been removed at the wrist, it will require more extensive care than if the attribute is lowered because the character has banged his funny bone against a spaceship bulkhead.

Strength is a measure of the ability of the person's muscles working to move the levers of the bones through their ranges-of-motion. Thus, any damage to muscles, tendons, bones, or ligaments will cause a decrease in the strength attribute. Such damage would include fractures, torn ligaments and tendons, bruises, sprains, and similar difficulties.

Dexterity is a measure of the ability to react quickly and efficiently to stimuli. Such stimuli are identified, reported, and interpreted by various portions of the nervous system. Injuries to eyes, ears, head (i.e., brain), and other nerve tracts will cause a decrease in the dexterity attribute. Such problems include concussions, black eyes, numbing impact to nerve centers, or blows to such spots as the solar plexus.

Endurance measures the body's ability to transport oxygen, allowing maximum function for long periods. Respiration and circulation are the most important factors to a good endurance, although all other body functions have some affect on it. It is important to note that the endocrine system, producer of hormones, will have a profound effect on the endurance of a person, by changing the efficiency of the aforementioned systems. Collapsed lungs, bleeding (internal and external), rupture of the spleen, and even hernia are examples of endurance injuries.

INJURY EXAMPLES

When a character is hit during combat, the "first blood" hit is applied entirely to one physical characteristic, determined randomly. Subsequent hits are applied over all three physical characteristics, as decided by the player. Each die of damage, however, must be applied to one single characteristic and cannot be split.

If any characteristic is reduced to 0, the character falls unconscious for 10 minutes. Upon recovery of consciousness, any wounded characteristics are placed midway between their wounded and full levels; round fractions down.

If two characteristics are reduced to 0, the character falls unconscious for 3 hours. Upon recovery of consciousness, any wounded characteristics remain at the wound level (or at 1, whichever is higher) until proper medical attention or recovery procedures are followed.

If all three physical characteristics are reduced to 0, the character is dead.

For example, a character with a UPP of 6A7885 is swung at by a sword during a disagreement. The first time he is hit, the character receives 2D damage against one characteristic. Rolling the dice (5 and 1) determines that 6 points of damage must be applied. Using 1-2 for strength, 3-4 for dexterity, and 5-6 for endurance, a roll of 2 means that all 6 points must be applied to strength. The character's luck has just run out, for his strength is temporarily reduced to 0 and the character falls unconscious for 10 minutes. Presuming that friends keep him from being killed, he wakes up with a strength characteristic of 3. The referee decides that this reduction was caused by a blow with the flat of the sword that broke the two bones below the knee in the character's leg.

Several months later, the character is recovered and is again involved in a sword fight. The first hit gives him 5 + 4 = 9 points of damage against his (3) dexterity, reducing it to 1. With an injury this drastic, the referee decides that the sword has struck the side of the head and deafened the character in one ear. (Is this injury permanent? The character's doctor will have to make a diagnosis later.)

A second hit gives him 5 + 2 points of damage. The player, trying to stay conscious for as long as possible, decides to apply 5 to his endurance, reducing it to 2, and 2 to his strength, reducing it to 4. This damage, the referee decides, has been caused by a cut on the left arm, which is bleeding rather well. The third hit causes 6 + 3 points of damage, and the character is in trouble. The player decides to apply the 6 points to his dexterity, reducing it to 0 (characteristics can never be negative), and to apply 3 points to his endurance, reducing it to 0. This injury was a jab to the abdomen, resulting in more bleeding. The character falls unconscious, and again his kind friends revive him, this time three hours later. His dexterity and endurance move to 1, and his strength remains at 4. Diagnosis and treatment may allow him to fight again in a few months.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

A new series on medicine in **Traveller** will begin with the next issue of the *Travellers' Digest*. For now, injuries to physical characteristics can be diagnosed and treated using the following UTPs. Diagnosis with the UTP system is a standard task.

To diagnose an injury:
ROUTINE, medical, int, 2 min (uncertain)
REFEREE: This task assumes that diagnosis is being done in a proper medical facility with the proper diagnostic tools. If the diagnosis is done in the field, increase the difficulty one level. If injuries are internal, the task is still ROUTINE in difficulty, but will take twice as long, and may need special equipment.

For NO TRUTH, treatment may be made, but it will have little or no effect, because the diagnosis is wrong: 1D-3 points of damage will be healed per week. Secretly reroll 3D each week on the failure table for the treatment to cause additional damage through a possible mishap (see the task below for handling mishaps on treatment).

For SOME TRUTH, treatment will have less than the desired effect, because the diagnosis is not totally correct: 1D points of damage will be healed per week. Also, secretly reroll 2D each week on the failure table for the treatment to cause additional damage through a possible mishap.

For TOTAL TRUTH, treatment will have no undesirable side-effects, and healing will proceed at its optimum rate: 1D points of damage will be healed each week, with no chance of mishap possible.

Once diagnosis has been successfully made, treatment can begin.

To treat an injury:
[difficulty], medical, int, 10 min
REFEREE: The difficulty level of this task depends upon the amount of damage the patient has sustained.

SUPERFICIAL (1D) damage requires a SIMPLE task; a character has SUPERFICIAL injuries when he has taken damage, but no characteristic has been reduced to zero.

MINOR (2D) damage requires a ROUTINE task; a character has MINOR injuries when one characteristic has been reduced to zero.

MAJOR or DESTROYED injuries require an attending surgeon (dexterity 8+) for treatment, otherwise, treat the doctor's medical skill as 1 level less than it really is.

MAJOR (3D) damage requires a DIFFICULT task; a character has MAJOR injuries when two characteristic have been reduced to zero.

DESTROYED (4D) damage requires a FORMIDABLE task; a character has DESTROYED injuries (i.e., is dead) when all three characteristic have been reduced to zero. Total truth diagnosis and treatment must take place within 30 minutes of death or this task is IMPOSSIBLE.

The task duration determines the amount of time that the attending physician must spend on the initial treatment; followup treatments may be necessary, and complete healing may not be achieved for some time.

If a SUPERFICIAL or MINOR mishap occurs during treatment, simply apply additional damage to already existing wounds.

If a MAJOR or DESTROYED mishap occurs during treatment, full recovery of the faculties may not be achievable even with the best treatment and latest technology. Reroll 2D on the mishap table to determine the level of permanent damage taken by the character.

UTPs FOR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Characters find lots of opportunities to use physical characteristics in tasks. This list is by no means exhaustive, but should get you started.

To safely jump down from a higher level:
ROUTINE, dex, absolute: 1 combat round (fateful)
REFEREE: If the jumping distance is 3 meters or less, use this task as is. If the jumping distance is 3 to 6 meters, this task becomes DIFFICULT and hazardous, fateful. If the jumping distance is 6 to 9 meters, this task becomes FORMIDABLE and hazardous, fateful. If the jumping distance is over 9 meters, the character automatically receives a DESTROYEDx2 mishap result (8D damage).

To break down a closed sliding door:
ROUTINE, [strength], 6 sec
REFEREE: Two characters may attempt to break down the door: if so they can both apply their strength as a DM to this task.

To drag or carry a heavy object during combat:
SIMPLE, dex, absolute: 1 combat round
REFEREE: A heavy object is any object whose mass in kilograms exceeds the character's strength x 2 (strength x 3 if in the military). If the object's mass is less than the character's strength x 5, then it is being carried, otherwise it must be dragged. In all cases, a character cannot drag anything with a mass greater than his strength x 15.

While carrying a heavy object, a character cannot move any faster than walking speed, and he cannot evade.

While dragging a heavy object, a character cannot move any faster than 1/2 walking speed (drop fractions), and he cannot evade.

To put on or take off a vacc suit:
SIMPLE, vacc suit, dex, 12 sec

To put on or take off battle dress or combat armor:
SIMPLE, vacc suit or battle dress, dex, 18 sec

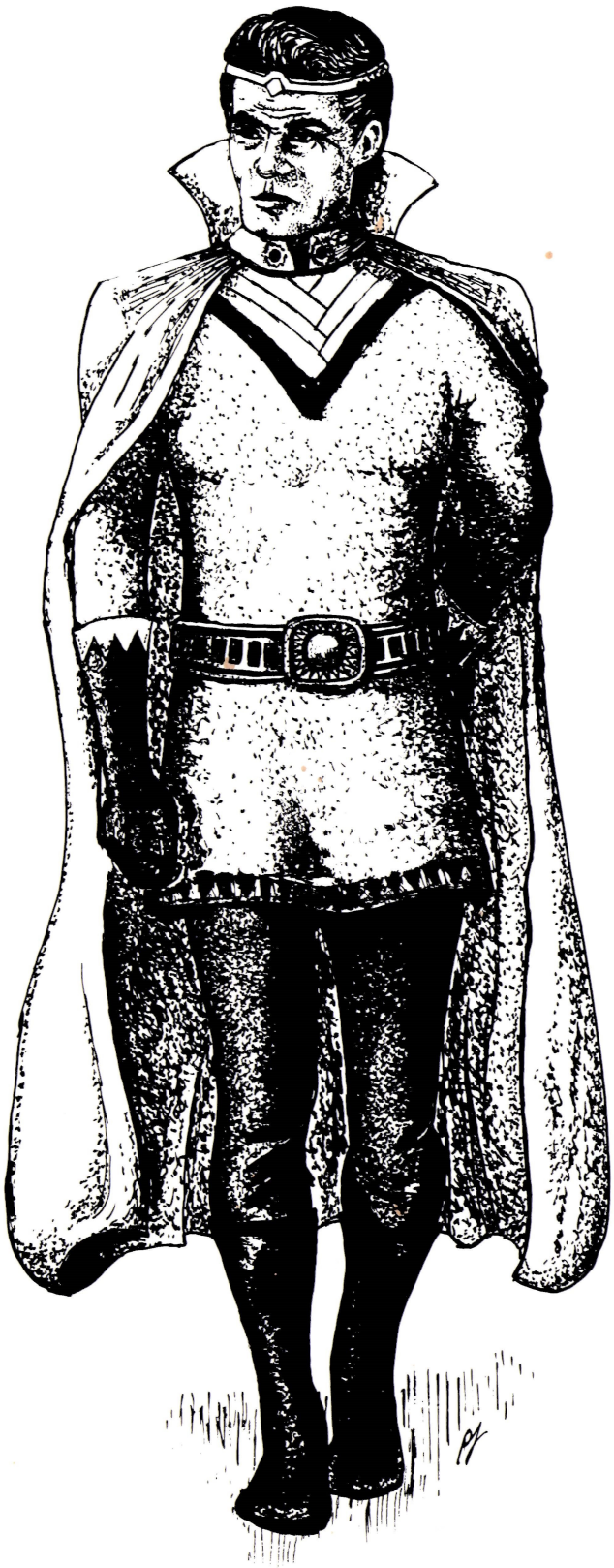
To apply a patch to breached vacc suits, battle dress, or combat armor:
ROUTINE, dex, 2 sec
REFEREE: Since a combat round is 15 seconds, this task may take more than one round while a character locates a patch, prepares it, and applies it to the breach.

COMING UP

This wraps up our three-part series on the UPP characteristics. In the next issue, we begin a new series on pointers for referees. We'll be throwing in a lot of pointers for things that we use in our own playtesting sessions. See you then.¤

An Interview with the Emperor

–by Sir Akidda Laagiir, O.E.G.



Strephon Aella Alkhalikoi was crowned emperor of the Third Imperium on Capital/Core on the fourteenth day of 1071. In the 33 years of his reign, Strephon has distinguished himself as a popular emperor in times of strain within and without the Imperium. Strephon is a young emperor: at 54, he is only four years older than his father, Paulo III, was when crowned. Paulo continued to serve as emperor for 40 years, and died at the age of 90, when Strephon was only 21 years old.

Eleven years later, war broke out on the frontier between the Imperium and the Zhodani Consulate. Quick reactions on the part of Imperial forces saved the day, and peace was achieved a few years later, in 1084. Emperor Strephon has received much of the credit for the Navy's state of readiness, and its ability to respond to this threat as easily as it did.

Strephon married his wife, Iolanthe, in 1067, two days before his eighteenth birthday. Their daughter, Princess Ciencia Iphegenia, is 15 years old.

Our correspondent, Akidda Laagiir, won the *Travellers' Digest* Touring Award in 1099. Typically, recipients spend the seven-year tenure of the award travelling in our circulation area, writing articles of special interest to its inhabitants. When Sir Akidda notified us that he had been knighted by the Duke of Deneb and was proceeding to Capital, we weren't sure whether to congratulate him or to call him home. Now we're glad we let him go. He spent an hour with the emperor this spring, having received a promise of a "no-holds-barred interview" after being knighted in a special ceremony by Strephon himself. Sir Akidda was at first surprised at the openness and honesty he received from the emperor.

"A lot of interview subjects are formal during interviews, oftentimes more formal than they would otherwise be," he writes, "but Strephon seemed relaxed and comfortable during our session. In the Octagon, sitting on the throne, the emperor is tall, stately, serious, and sometimes stern, but when I spoke with him in the Imperial Gardens, he joked and laughed quite a bit. His crown was off, his collar was loose, and he surprised me at one point by taking off his shoes and wading into a shallow pool of water. All in all, Strephon was much more person-able than I expected, and he treated me as if I were an old friend come to visit after an absence of many years."

Q. When did you first notice that you were different from other people?

A. I am afraid that is a misconception, Sir Akidda, but fortunately I have never suffered from it. I am not different from other people, but I am in a different position than most.

Q. When were you first aware of that difference in

position, then?

A. I remember a time when I was three years old and I had been playing in the palace garden. My mother came over to me, picked me up, and said, "Now, now, little emperors should not get so dirty." My father was the emperor—I knew that—and my mother always called me her "little emperor", but at the time I thought everyone's father was an emperor and that all my playmates were "little emperors".

Q. Yet you are different.

A. Sure, I'm different, because my mother happened to be named Elsbet and my father happened to be named Paulo. And certainly my upbringing was quite different from that of most Imperial citizens. But what does it mean to say that I am different? What extra knowledge does one have, to say such a thing? I can just as easily say that you are different from everyone else, or that a belter plying the space lanes of Tauri is different—everyone is different, and we can all be happier if we take advantage of these differences in cooperative ways.

Q. If you had the choice, knowing what you know now, would you have chosen to become emperor?

A. That's a difficult question to answer, not because I am unsure of myself, but because it's so easy to misunderstand. I've answered this question before, and I've always said "no". I wouldn't choose to be emperor if I had had the choice. But no one has that choice to make in life. One is born in a certain station, or one grows in life to become a certain sort of person, and one must reach out with both hands and do the best he can with what he is given. Being emperor is an enormous responsibility, and it's never easy, but I'm proud of the things I have accomplished during my reign and I have no intention of giving up my post as long as I can do the job.

Q. What about your wife, Iolanthe? Is she happy being empress, or does she feel the way you do?

A. Naturally, the responsibilities she has are different from the responsibilities I have, but the stresses she feels are no different from mine. She is a representative of the Third Imperium in everything she does, just as I am, and that's a difficult job.

Q. You're saying then that she's unhappy with it?

A. I'm not saying that at all. She loves it, and wouldn't trade it for anything. I wouldn't let her quit, either. Part of my own job, you must realize, includes greeting and entertaining visitors from all parts of the realm. That's something she does better than I. You'd be surprised at how many of my guests leave with a good impression of me, thanks in part to the kind graces of Iolanthe.

Q. A few weeks ago, you installed Dulinor of Dlan as the Archduke of the Ilelish Domain. Many of the nobles I've talked to here on Capital seem unhappy with your choice, and one commentator has called it "Strephon's worst decision". Did you screw up?

A. When I promised you a "no-holds-barred" interview, I didn't realize you would hold me to my word, but I'm glad you brought this subject up.

Dulinor has been someone I've admired for some time now, and I regret that there aren't more nobles like him. He has a willingness to cut through to the heart of a problem and solve it. Occasionally he rubs people the wrong way, but I believe that in some of those situations Dulinor is misjudged. Dulinor is not a stuffy person, and when others expect him to act that way they are bound to be disappointed. Dulinor has a different attitude toward the nobility than most, and I find it refreshing.

Q. Are you saying you picked Dulinor knowing that he would upset other nobles?

A. Don't misunderstand me, Sir Akidda. I can't afford to purposely antagonize other nobles. But this is my choice, and it's one I'll live with. I wanted Dulinor to be archduke, and I'm the one who has the final say. Some of my closest advisers told me not to go through with this, but I felt at this time that I wanted to inject some new blood into the nobility. The Imperium needs more people like Dulinor, I don't regret my decision in any way, and that's all I want to say about it at this time.

Q. You're hoping, then, that the rest of the nobility will get used to Dulinor?

A. They'll have to, and they should have plenty of time. He's young and healthy, and I expect him to serve me well for many years.

Q. We've talked a little about you and your wife, Your Imperial Highness. I'd like to turn the attention now to your daughter. When will she be marrying?

A. She's only 15, Sir Akidda; I hope you're not in any hurry.

Q. No, I'm not asking on account of myself. It's just that there are accounts in the popular press that link her romantically with one noble or another, and you yourself married at 17. Speculation is rife, and I hoped you might be able to shed some light on this matter.

A. I don't really know what to say. She's a very independent-minded girl.

Q. Let me read to you, for example, this account from the Ilelish Gazette: "It is unfair to say that Princess Ciencia has green eyes, for many beautiful women have green eyes. But looking into Ciencia's, one has the distinct feeling of falling, falling a very long way..."

A. Actually, her eyes aren't always green. They shift from green to gray, depending on the mood she's in.

Q. That must be very handy.

A. I suppose it would be, except that I haven't yet figured out which color goes with which mood. I do know that if her ears turn red, one should hurry from the room without delay.

Q. Angry?

A. Another insufficient word, Sir Akidda. I don't want to sound like the overly proud father, but I'm afraid my daughter deserves superlatives in most aspects of her life.

Q. What do you consider the most important achieve-

ment of your reign?

A. Peace. We are at peace now, and we have been at peace for 20 years, since the conclusion of the Fourth Frontier War, a war, not incidentally, that we won. Our borders on every side are secure: we are friendly with the Vargr regions coreward as never before, we are trading with K'kree and Hivers to trailing, rimward we are about to relax martial law from Terra, a move that should further settle the Solomani Rim area, and the Aslans are our allies in their region of space, with regular cultural and trade exchanges.

Q. What then do you consider the biggest problem you have yet to face?

A. Peace again. Right now, as I just said, we have peace with those along our borders, but this peace can be preserved only at a cost to us, not a great cost, but a cost nonetheless. Our vigilance must be maintained at all times. There are certain elements which would take advantage of any weakness we displayed, and these must be dealt with promptly and firmly.

Q. You mean the Zhodani?

A. I don't want to mention any names, but let me just say that I've met with the Duke of Regina recently about certain developments that concern both of us a great deal.

Q. What do you see for the future of the Imperium?

A. Things will just keep getting better and better. There are some amazing technological breakthroughs being made, as I'm sure you know, and as these become more available, all the citizens will be enjoying life more.

Q. And yourself? What is your future?

A. I'll just keep taking one day at a time. No one lives forever, not even emperors. If I reign as long as my father did, I have at least seven more years before Ciencia takes over. If I live as long as my father did, I have 40 more years. I don't know what will happen tomorrow, for myself or for anyone, but I do know I want to be there every second to see it as it unfolds.¤

Coming In the Next Issue...

REFERENCE POINT
Deep underground at the center of the Imperium, some "ancient" computers are the key to unlocking a baffling mystery.

Tech Briefs: Akidda's Tech Level 15 Holocrystal Recorder

Playing the Characters: Akidda Laagiir

A New Gaming Digest Series: Practical Referee's Pointers

More Official Answers in *Traveller* Q&A

More Official Library Data of the Core Sector

Another Official Subsector Map

A New Series on High Tech Medicine

More Traveller: 2300 Vehicles

Second Survey: Statistical Data on the Third Imperium

All this and more coming in issue #10, available this September.

Traveller Q&A

From time to time, we receive questions from readers on various aspects of **Traveller**. In the past, we have attempted to answer these questions on an individual basis as time permitted. With our new larger format, however, we are incorporating the best of these questions and answers into a new regular column, debuting with this issue.

The answers come from a variety of sources. When a question can be dealt with by a simple quotation from a published work, we do the digging and publish the results of our research. When a question breaks new ground, it is answered by ourselves or by some other eminent **Traveller** authority.

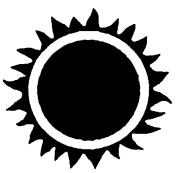
Every answer published in this column is seen and approved by Marc W. Miller, **Traveller's** designer. We want to stress that anything appearing on this page is *official* for the **Traveller** game unless otherwise stated to be a variant.

What does the Imperial flag look like? I picture it as having the Imperial sunburst against a plain background, but what color is it?— R.P.

When Cleon established the Third Imperium, he selected the now famous sunburst as the symbol to represent his new empire. The original Imperial banner had a golden yellow sunburst against a black background, representing Capital's type G star against the blackness of space.

In 247, the Eliyoh (a minor race) joined the Imperium. The Imperial flag was unimpressive to them, since their eyesight does not include the visible light spectrum. This prompted Empress Porfiria to declare in that same year that the Imperial sunburst would henceforth have no official color—it was the sunburst symbol that mattered. Color was unimportant.

However, the Imperial banner hanging in the Emperor's throne room still displays the original colors: a yellow sunburst on a black background.



By the way, the Imperial Scouts always use a red sunburst, while the Imperial Navy uses a yellow sunburst on their vehicles and starships, and a metallic gold sunburst on their uniforms.
— *Marc W. Miller.*

Compared to the Sol subsector (where there is a high percentage of worlds with class A and B starports and high tech levels), the subsector data you have printed for the Vland subsector and the Core subsector look randomly generated. Don't you think this fails to convey the feeling of an old, highly-settled area? — N.M.

You are somewhat correct in saying that the Vland and Core subsectors were randomly generated, but there's more to it than that. GDW generated these subsectors randomly using tables modified from regular world generation. For example, there are no class X starports in the entire Vland sector or Core Sector, and there are an above average number of class A and B starports.

True, the Solomani Rim sector has a definite flavor all its own, and was not generated using the regular **Traveller** world generation tables either.

While this disparity may not fit our concept of what the central sectors of the Imperium are like, these sectors are by no means "wrong." Something you have not yet seen are the sectors closer to the Solomani Rim. In the coming months, you will see subtle but definite changes as we move through the Massilia, Diaspora, and Old Expanses sectors.

The average tech level begins to drop slightly as one approaches the Solomani Rim, and the average world population goes up. Also the average minimum tech level goes up the closer one gets to Solomani space, although the upper tech level limit drops slightly (fewer tech level 15, more tech level 14). In a nutshell, the tech level spread *narrows* and drops slightly—reflecting the more homogeneous conditions that are typical of Solomani influenced space. The Solomani's racial drive is legendary, and has had a lasting effect on the worlds closer to Solomani space.

Vland was once the center of a great interstellar empire, but that empire fell over 3,000 years ago. And the Vilani's approach to "conquering" was not military subjection like the Solomani, but was instead an economic subjection.

Rome, Greece, and Persia (Iran today) were all once great empires on earth. What have they got to show for it today? A few scattered relics. So it is with Vland. A few scattered worlds start to approach the glory that was once known during the First Imperium. Also note that the First Imperium stagnated at a technological high of tech 11—many worlds near Vland still hover around tech 11 today.

So what about the Third Imperium? Prior to its founding, the interstellar dark ages of the Long Night caused many worlds to turn in on themselves and abandon their starfaring ways and its associated technology. For 1700 years, technology continued to drop. This period had a drastic detrimental effect on world tech levels and starports.

The Third Imperium has always allowed its member worlds a wide degree of latitude, and meddles very little in local affairs. Because of this, the Imperium must let the worlds be, and not insist the ones with lower tech leves beef up their technology as the Solomani tend to do by nature. The Imperium is a mix of both Solomani and Vilani culture, which creates interesting pockets of worlds with technological lethargy right next to worlds with obsessive technological drive. — *Joe D. Fugate Sr.*

Editor's Note: By the way, the tech level of Capital in issue 8 was incorrectly listed as tech level 10. The correct tech level is 15. The typographical error strikes again.

How do I as a referee assign the difficulty level of a task in my own scenarios? — H.L.

There is no magic formula: it's largely "seat of the pants." Listen to your players and elicit their input as you assign a task difficulty level. As with anything you are new at, practice is the key to improving your confidence level.

The difficulty level on many tasks varies from situation to situation, and cannot be boiled down into one all-encompassing "canned" task. For example, just because it is a DIFFICULT task to bribe an official on Regina, that doesn't necessarily mean it's also a DIFFICULT task to bribe an official on Vland. That in itself is some of the power of the UTP system—it is flexible.

However, "canned" or fixed tasks *are* appropriate in some situations. The UTP's own determination task is a fixed task. Combat in **MegaTraveller** (coming from GDW at the end of the summer) uses fixed tasks for many things. For example:

To hit a target at medium range (5 to 50 m) with a handgun:
DIFFICULT, handgun, dex

To hit a target at medium range (5 to 50 m) with a rifle:
ROUTINE, rifleman, dex

More accurately, these combat tasks are semi-fixed. Several things can alter the difficulty level of these basic tasks either up or down. For example, if the target is large (ground car sized or larger) the difficulty of these tasks decreases one level; if the target is under cover but still visible, the difficulty of these tasks increases one level. — *Joe D. Fugate Sr.*

Civilian Vehicles for Traveller: 2300

—by Rob Caswell

Saab-Sikorsky "Condor VX"

Really more an aircraft than any other type of vehicle, the Condor VX is a two-man, personal jump-jet. Although the technology to construct this manner of vehicle was refined in the late 20th century, it did not see any kind of large-scale production until the mid-21st century.

On Earth and many of the older colonies, where VTOLs must fly by the same regulations governing any aircraft flight, military, governmental and commercial agencies use VTOLs more than do private individuals. However, on several frontier colonies and outposts, VTOLs are a significant method of private transport.

Tirane is an example of a colony where private VTOLs are used heavily for private transportation. Tirane's founders set up regulations and traffic control systems which which give preference to personal VTOLs. This, combined with the planet's relative wealth, has made Tirane one of the leading colonies in the use of personal VTOLs. The Condor VX is fairly typical of this type of craft.

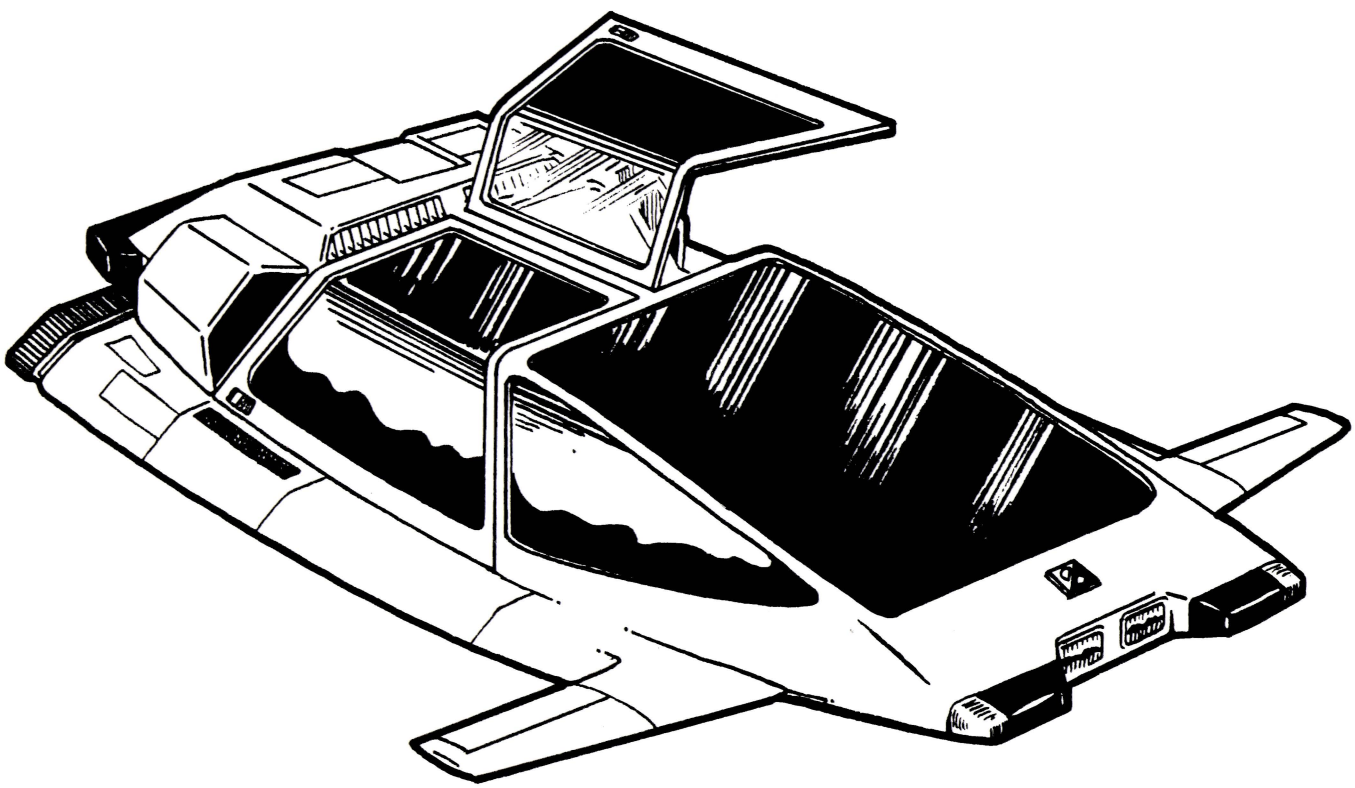
The use of vectored thrust nozzles lining the craft's underbelly gives it a fair hovering capability, though at a considerable increase in fuel expenditure (divide endurance by 4). The cannards may be folded up when the craft is grounded so that it may be parked or stored more easily. The landing struts terminate in a durable pad—each of which has retractable, steerable, self-powered wheels so that the Condor VX can be manuevered into a convenient parking facility.

The passenger compartment is accessed via two upward-swinging doors. The cargo space is at the rear of the vehicle and is not accessible from the passenger compartment.

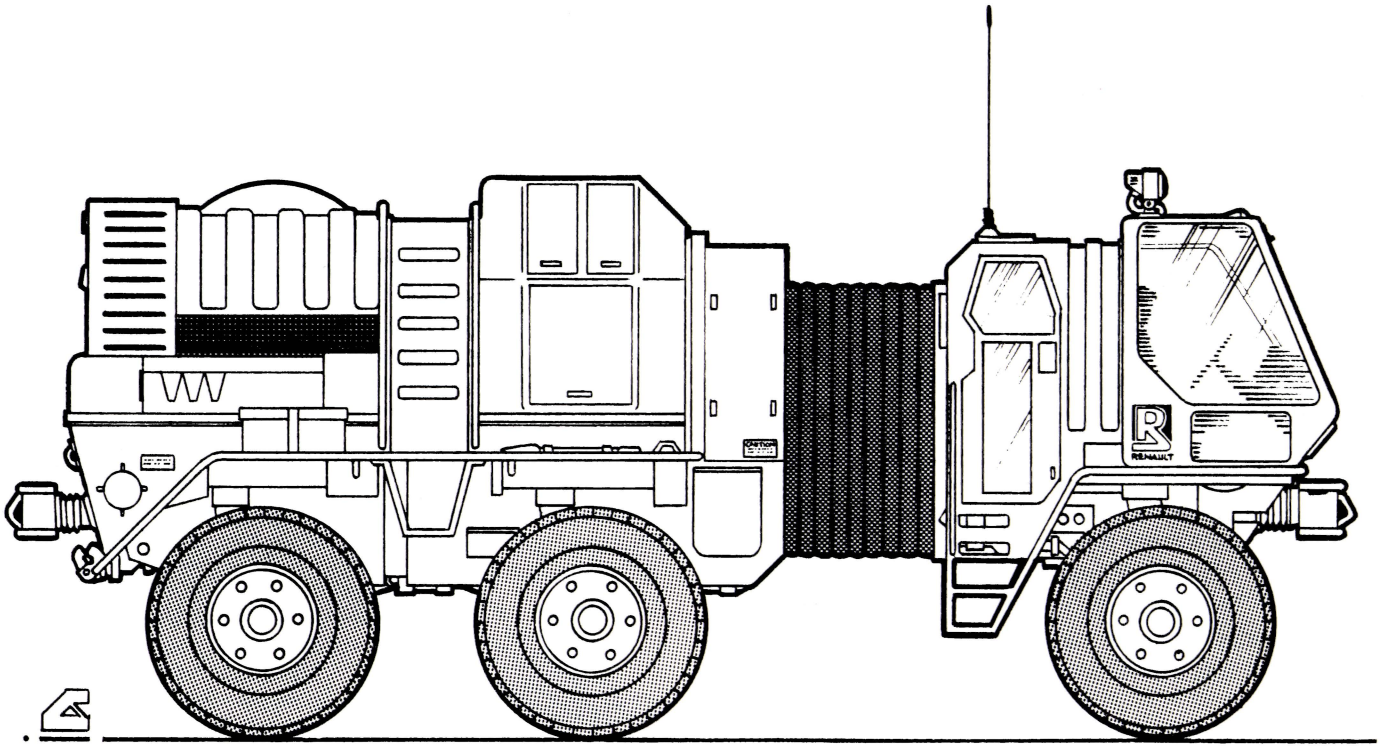
Avionics are fitted into the nose and include a 300 km range radio, collision avoidance radar, an identification transmitter, and an autopilot. The autopilot constantly monitors the flight path. If it detects an immenent collision, it will take control of the craft long enough to put it on a safe heading. The craft can operate with the autopilot disconnected; on Tirane, for example, it is unlawful to do so: operating with the autopilot disconnected in marked high traffic areas results in stiff fines and a 1 year suspension of the operator's license.

Type: Personal, jet propelled, VTOL transport. *Crew:* Pilot. *Weight:* 2,000 kg. *Armor:* All faces 0.5. *Evasion:* 13. *Sensor Range:* 30km. *Signature:* +1. *Cargo:* 1 passenger and 100 kg cargo. *Maximum Speed:* 700 kph. *Cruising Speed:* 500 kph. *Combat Movement:* 1,500 meters. *Endurance:* 3.5 hrs. *Price:* Lv 30,000.

Saab-Sikorsky "Condor VX"



Renault "Pionier" HUV



Renault "Pionier" HUV

Designed specifically with the needs of the distant colony worlds and outposts in mind, the Pionier HUV (Heavy Utility Vehicle) is an extremely durable, multi-role utility vehicle. In general, wheeled and tracked vehicles are the standard on the frontier since they have no dependence on atmospheric pressure or composition for operation.

The Pioneer's excellent ATV characteristics are achieved by its large, independently-driven, six-wheeled configuration with heavy suspension and high ground clearance. The two-piece chassis is jointed between the passenger and utility sections to allow the vehicle to flex up to 37 degrees in any direction with respect to its axis and to move tortionally up to 45 degrees in either direction. The water-tight hull and large tires make it floatation-capable; as an option, it may be fitted with impellers for aquatic surface propulsion.

The Pionier's engineering was kept as simple as possible to ease repair difficulty and to simplify the manufacture of replacement parts. With the high cost of importing parts from the core worlds, this factor gave the Pionier the ability to edge out its competitors and become a primary utility vehicle of the French Arm.

The Pionier may be factory ordered in a number of configurations, from firefighters to survey rovers. Each of the configurations may be constructed with a pressurized cab, if desired. Selecting this option reduces the passenger capacity by one.

Type: Wheeled Heavy Utility Vehicle. *Crew:* Driver. *Weight:* 4,200 kg. *Armor:* Suspension 0.4/All faces 0.4. *Signature:* 6. *Evasion:* 1. *Maximum Speed:* 135 kph. *Cruising Speed:* 100 kph. *Cargo (standard configuration):* 4 passengers and 1,500 kg cargo. *Combat Movement:* 275 meters. *Off-Road Mobility:* 3/4. *Power Plant:* 0.14 MW Hydrogen fuel cell. *Fuel Capacity:* 120 kg. *Fuel Consumption:* 4 kg/hr cruising, 5 kg/hr maximum. *Endurance:* 30 hrs. *Price (standard config.):* Lv 15,000.

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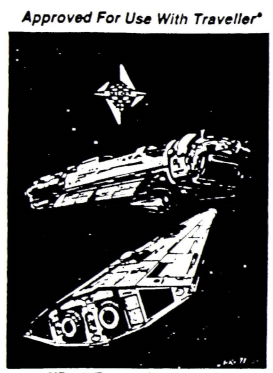

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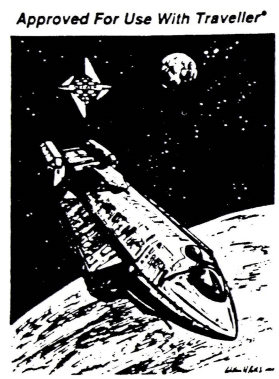

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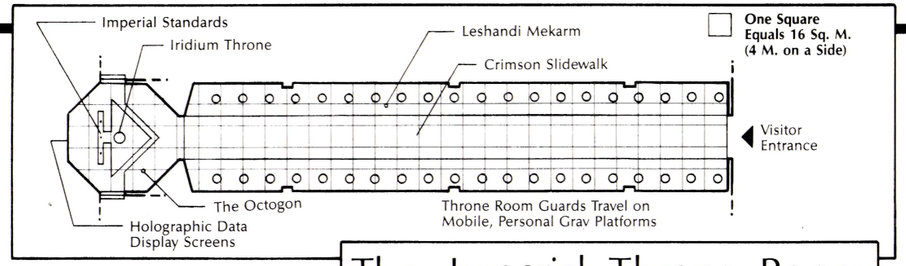
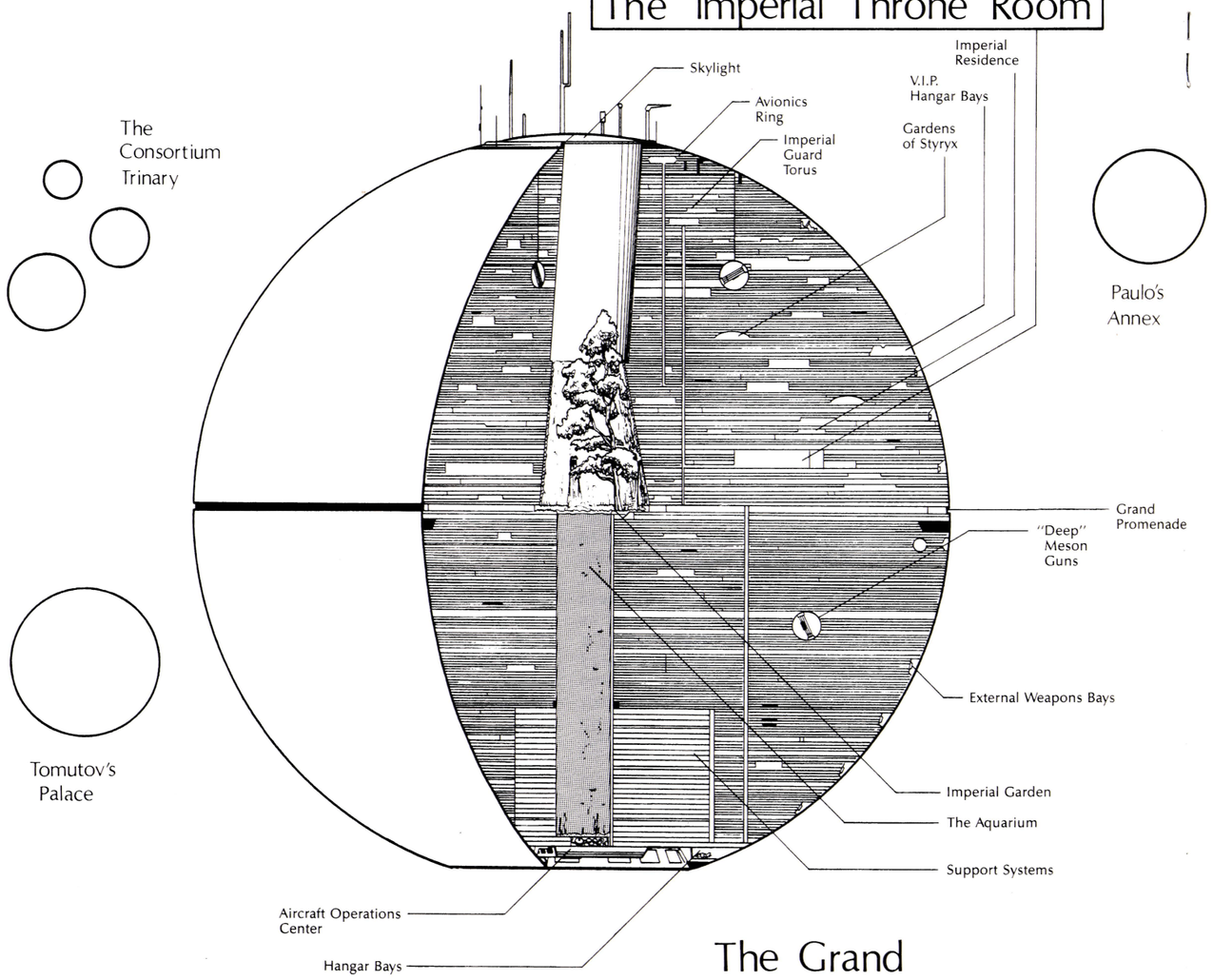
THE IMPERIAL PALACE GROUNDS ON CAPITAL



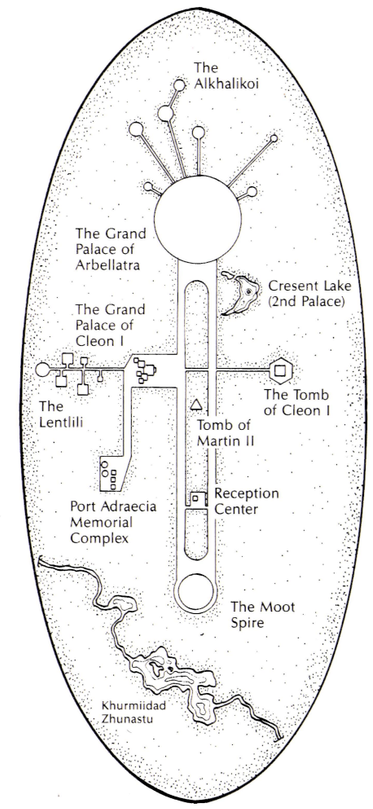
The Imperial Throne Room



The Grand Palace of Arbellatra

Constructed 629-633

SCALE: 1 INCH EQUALS 1 KM.



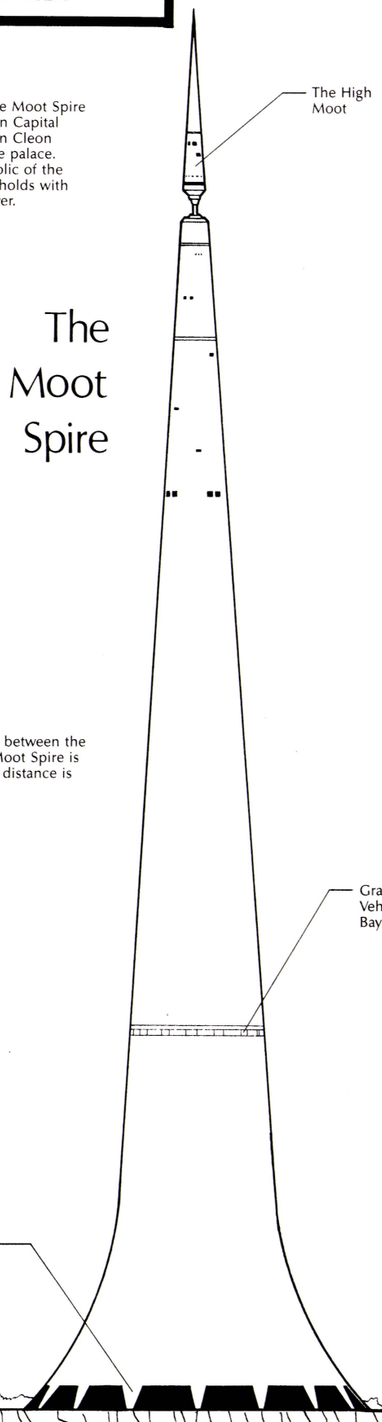
The Imperial Park is located at the center of the city of Cleon and is surrounded by large stretches of low-lying buildings which comprise the Cleon metropolitan area.

The Imperial Park

0 1 2 3 4 5

Hundreds of Meters

The Moot Spire

At 1.75 km in height, the Moot Spire is the tallest structure on Capital and the only structure in Cleon which is higher than the palace. Obviously, this is symbolic of the power which the Moot holds with regards to Imperial power.

The horizontal distance between the Grand Palace and the Moot Spire is not to scale. The actual distance is 4.25 km.